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1

PIERS THE PLOWMAN

AND

RICHARD THE REDELESS

WILLIAM LANGLAND

Oxford University Press, Amen House, London E.C.4

**GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI KUALA LUMPUR
CAPE TOWN IBADAN NAIROBI ACCRA**

THE VISION OF WILLIAM
CONCERNING
PIERS THE PLOWMAN

IN THREE PARALLEL TEXTS

TOGETHER WITH

RICHARD THE REDELESS

BY WILLIAM LANGLAND

(ABOUT 1362—1399 A.D.)

EDITED FROM NUMEROUS MANUSCRIPTS

WITH PREFACE, NOTES, AND A GLOSSARY

BY THE

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¹ In the C-text, the *Vita de Dobet* begins with Pass. xviii.

THE VISION OF WILLIAM

CONCERNING

PIERS THE PLOWMAN.

[In the following pages all three versions of this Poem are exhibited in parallel texts. The A-text, or earliest version, appears at the upper part of the pages, as far as it goes. Being much shorter than the others, it disappears from the latter portion of the text.

The B-text, or second version, appears on the lower part of the left-hand pages; towards the end, it occupies the whole of each left-hand page.

The C-text, or latest version, appears on the lower part of the right-hand pages; towards the end, it occupies the whole of each right-hand page.

The A-text is printed as it occurs in V = Vernon MS. (in the Bodleian Library). All deviations from V are shewn in the foot-notes, and are taken from other MSS., viz. T = Trin. Coll. Cam. R. 3. 14; H = Harl. 875, Brit. Museum; U = Univ. Coll. Oxford; H₁ = Harl. 6041; D = Douce 323 (Bodleian Library). V is imperfect, ending at Pass. XI. 180; the rest of this Passus is from T. Pass. XII is from MS. Rawl. Poet. 137, collated with U throughout lines 1-19; the rest of this Passus occurs in the Rawlinson MS. and in the Ingilby MS. *only*. Observe that the text in V abounds with *Southern* forms, due to the scribe.

The B-text is printed from L = MS. Laud 851 (Bodleian Library). All deviations from L are given in the foot-notes, and are taken from other MSS., viz. W = the MS. printed by Mr. Wright (Trin. Coll. Cam. B. 15. 17); O = Oriel 79; R = Rawl. Poet. 38; C = Camb. Univ. Lib. Dd. 1. 17; B = Bodley 814; C₁ = Camb. Univ. Lib. Ll. 4. 14; and Y = Mr. Yates Thompson's MS.

The C-text is printed from P = MS. Phillipps 8231. All deviations from P are shewn in the foot notes, many being mere corrections (due to collation) of defective spellings. The other MSS. are E = Laud 656; I = Ilchester MS.; M = Museum MS. (Cotton, Vesp. B. 16); F = Camb. Univ. Lib. Ff. 5. 35; G = Camb. Univ. Lib. Dd. 3. 13; S = Corpus Christi Coll. Camb. 293; B = Bodley 814; K = (Kenelm) Digby 171 (Bodleian Library); T = Trin. Coll. Cam. R. 3. 14.]

Prologus.

IN a somer sesun · whon softe was the sonne,
 I schop me in-to a schroud · a scheep as I were;
 In habite of an hermite · vn-holy of werkes,
 Wende I wydene in this world · wondres to here. 4
 Bote in a Mayes morwynyng · on Maluerne hulles
 Me bi-fel a ferly · a feyrie me thouhte;
 I was weori of wandringe · and wente me to reste

INCIPIT LIBER DE PETRO PLOWMAN.

Prologus.

IN a somer seson · whan soft was the sonne,
 I shope me in shroudes · as I a shepe were,
 In habite as an heremite · vnholy of workes,
 Went wyde in this world · wondres to here. 4
 Ac on a May mornynge · on Maluerne hulles
 Me byfel a ferly · of fairy me thouzte;
 I was wery forwandred · and went me to reste
 Vnder a brode banke · bi a bornes side, 8
 And as I lay and lened · and loked in the wateres,
 I slombred in a slepyng · it sweyued so merye.
 Thaṅne gan I to meten · a merueilouse sweuene,
 That I was in a wilderness · wist I neuer where, 12
 As I bihelde in-to the est · an hiegh to the sonne,
 I seigh a toure on a toft · trielich ymaked;
 A depe dale binethe · a dongeon there-inne,
 With depe dyches and derke · and dredful of sight. 16
 A faire felde ful of folke · fonde I there bytwene,
 Of alle maner of men · the mene and the riche,
 Worchyng and wandryng · as the worlde asketh.

Vndur a brod banke · bi a bourne syde, 8
 And as I lay and leonede · and lokede on the watres,
 I slumberde in a slepyng · hit sownede so murie.

Thenne gon I meeten · a meruelous sweuene,
 That I was in a wilderness · wuste I neuer where, 12
 And as I beo-heold in-to the est · an-heiȝ to the sonne,
 I sauh a tour on a toft · trizely i-maket;
 A deop dale bi-neothe · a dungun ther-inne,
 With deop dich and derk · and dredful of siht. 16

A feir feld ful of folk · fond I ther bi-twene,
 Of alle maner of men · the mene and the riche,
 Worchinge and wondringe · as the world asketh.

HIC INCIPIT VISIO WILLELMI DE PETRO PLOUHMANN.

PASSUS I.

IN a somere seyson · whan softe was the sonne,
 Y shop me in-to shrobbis · as y a shepherde were,
 In abit as an ermite · vnholy of werkes,
 Ich wente forth in the worlde · wonders to hure, 4
 And sawe meny cellis · and selcouthe thynges.
 Ac on a May morwenyng · on Maluerne hilles
 Me byfel for to slepe · for weyrynesse of wandryng;
 And in a launde as ich lay · lenede ich and slepte, 8
 And merueylously me mette · as ich may ȝow telle;
 Al the welthe of this worlde · and the woo bothe,
 Wynkyng as it were · wyterly ich saw hyt,
 Of tryuthe and of tricherye · of tresoun and of gyle, 12
 Al ich saw slepynge · as ich shal ȝow telle.
 Esteward ich byhulde · after the sonne,
 And sawe a toure, as ich trowede · truthe was ther-ynne;
 Westwarde ich waitede · in a whyle after, 16
 And sawe a deep dale · deth, as ich lyuede,
 Wonede in tho wones · and wyckede spiritus.
 A fair feld, ful of folke · fonde ich ther bytwyne,
 Alle manere of men · the mene and the ryche, 20
 Worchyng and wandryng · as the worlde asketh.

a MFSE; P om.

4. worle P.

16. wyle P.

19. fol (*for* ful) P.

Summe putten hem to the plouȝ · and pleiden hem ful seldene, 20
 In eringe and in sowynge · swonken ful harde,
 That monie of theos wasturs · in glotonye distruen.

And summe putten hem to pruide · apparaylden hem ther-after,
 In cuntinaunce of clothinge · queinteliche de-gyset; 24
 To preyere and to penaunce · putten heom monye,
 For loue of vr lord · liueden ful harde,
 In hope for to haue · heuene-riche blisse;
 As ances and hermytes · that holdeth hem in heore celles, 28
 Coueyte not in cuntre · to carien a-boute,
 For non likerous lyflode · heore licam to plese.

And summe chosen chaffare · to cheeuen the bettere,

Some putten hem to the plow · pleyed ful seldæ, 20
 In setting and in sowyng · swonken ful harde,
 And wonnen that wastours · with glotonye destruyeth.

And some putten hem to pruyde · apparailed hem there-after,
 In contenaunce of clothynge · comen disgised. 24

In prayers and in penance · putten hem manye,
 Al for loue of owre lorde · lyueden ful streyte,
 In hope forto haue · heueneriche blisse;
 As ances and heremites · that holden hem in here selles, 28
 And coueiten nought in contre · to kairen aboute,
 For no likerous liflode · her lykam to plese.

And somme chosen chaffare · they cheuen the bettere,
 As it semeth to owre syȝt · that suche men thryueth; 32
 And somme murthes to make · as mynstralles conneth,
 And geten gold with here glee · synneles, I leue.
 Ac iapers and iangelers · Iudas chylderen,
 Feynen hem fantasies · and soles hem maketh, 36
 And han here witte at wille · to worche ȝif thei sholde.
 That Poule precheth of hem · I nel nought preue it here;
Qui turpiloquium loquitur · is Luciferes hyne.

Bidders and beggeres · fast aboute ȝede, 40
 With her belies and her bagges · of bred ful ycrammed;
 Fayteden for here fode · fouȝten atte ale;
 In glotonye, god it wote · gon hij to bedde,

A. 34. *This line is from T; also in HUD; V omits it.* 41. bratful T;
 bretful H₁; bredful UD; faste VH. B. 20. putten W; put L; see l. 23.
 34. *Read giltles, as in Text A.* 39. is—hyne W; L om. 41. belies W;
 bely L. bagges WCO; bagge L. C. 22. pute P. 23. sawyng P.

As hit semeth to vre siht · that suche men scholden ; 32
 And summe murthhes to maken · as munstrals cunne,
 And gete gold with here gle · giltles, I trowe.

Bote iapers and iangelers · Iudas children,
 Founden hem fantasyes · and fooles hem maaden, 36
 And habbeth wit at heor wille · to worchen ȝif hem luste.
 That Poul precheth of hem · I dar not preouen heere ;
Qui loquitur turpiloquium · hee is Luciferes hyne.

Bidders and beggers · faste a-boute eoden, 40
 Til heor bagges and heore balies · weren bratful I-crommet ;
 Feyneden hem for heore foode · fouȝten atte alle ;
 In glotonye, God wot · gon heo to bedde,

Somme putte hem to plow · and pleiden ful seylde,
 In setting and in sowyng · swonken ful harde,
 And wonne that thuse wasters · with glotenye destroyeth. 24
 Somme putte hem to pruyde · and parailede hem ther-after,
 In contenaunce and in clothyng · in meny kynne gyse ;
 In praiers and in penaunces · putten hem manye,
 Al for the loue of oure lorde · lyueden ful harde, 28
 In hope to haue a gode ende · and heuene-ryche blysse ;
 As ances and eremites · that holden hem in hure cellys,
 Coueytynge noȝt in contrees · to carien a-boute
 For no lykerouse lyflode · hure lykame to plese. 32

And somme chosen cheffare : they cheuede the betere,
 As hit semeth to oure syght · that soche men thryueth.
 And somme murthes to make · as mynstrals conneth,
 That wollen neyther swynke ne swete · bote swery grcte othes, 36
 And fynde vp foule fantesyes · and foles hem maken,
 And hauen witte at wylle · to worche yf they wolde.
 That Paul prechith of hem · prouen hit ich myghte,
Qui turpiloquium loquitur · ys Lucyfers knaue. 40
 Bydders and beggers · faste a-boute ȝoden,
 Tyl hure bagge and hure bely · were bretful ycrammyd,
 Faytynge for hure fode · and fouhten atten ale.
 In glotenye, god wot · goth they to bedde, 44

24. wit P. distryeth P. 26. contenance P. 28. lyueden ESM ;
 lyuend P. 29. goud (for gode) P. 33. cheffede P ; cheued S.
 42. bretful MFE ; bredful P. 44. god wot MF ; tho gomes PS.

And ryseth vp with ribaudye · this Roberdes knaues; 44
 Sleep and sleuzthe · suweth hem euere.

Pilgrimes and palmers · plihten hem to-gederes
 For to seche seint Ieme · and seintes at Roome;
 Wenten forth in heore wey · with mony wyse tales, 48
 And hedden leue to lyzen · al heore lyf aftir.

Ermytes on an hep · with hokide staues,
 Wenten to Walsyngham · & here wenchis aftir;

Grete lobres and longe · that loth weore to swynke 52
 Clotheden hem in copes · to beo knowen for bretheren;
 And summe schopen hem to hermytes · heore ese to haue.

And risen with ribaudye · tho Roberdes knaues; 44
 Slepe and sori sleuthe · seweth hem cure.

Pilgrymes and palmers · plizted hem togidere
 To seke seynt Iames · and seyntes in Rome.
 Thei went forth in here wey · with many wise tales, 48
 And hadden leue to lye · al here lyf after.

I seigh somme that seiden · thei had ysouzt seyntes;
 To eche a tale that thei tolde · here tonge was tempred to lye,
 More than to sey soth · it semed bi here speche. 52

Heremites on an heep · with hoked staues,
 Wenten to Walsyngham · and here wenchis after;
 Grete lobyres and longe · that loth were to swynke,
 Clotheden hem in copis · to ben knowen fram othere; 56
 And shopen hem heremites · here ese to haue.

I fonde there freris · alle the foure ordres,
 Preched the peple · for profit of hem-seluen,
 Glosed the gospel · as hem good lyked, 60

For coueitise of copis · construed it as thei wolde.
 Many of this maistres freris · mowe clothen hem at lykyng,
 For here money and marchandise · marchen togideres.
 For sith charite hath be chapman · and chief to shryue lordes,
 Many ferlis han fallen · in a fewe ȝeris. 65

But holychirche and hij · holde better togideres;
 The moste myschief on molde · is mountyng wel faste.

There preched a pardonere · as he a prest were, 68

A. 49. aftir THUD; tyme V. 50, 51. *These lines are from* TUH,D; VH
omit them. 54. hem THD; V om. 61. and THUD; V om. B. 67.

I font there freres · all the foure ordres,
 Prechinge the peple · for profyt of heore wombes, 56
 Glosynge the gospel · as hem good liketh,
 For couetyse of copes · construeth hit ille;
 For monye of this maistres · mowen clothen hem at lyking,
 For moneye and heore marchaundie · meeten ofte to-gedere. 60
 Seththe charite hath be chapmon · and cheef to schriuen lordes,
 Mony ferlyes han bi-falle · in a fewe ȝeres.
 But holychirche bi-ginne · holde bet to-gedere,
 The moste mischeef on molde · mounteth vp faste. 64
 Ther prechede a pardoner · as he a prest were,

And aryseth with ribaudrie · tho Roberdes knaues;
 Slep and synful sleuthe · seweth suche euere.
 Pylgrimis and palmers · plyȝhten hem to-gederes,
 To seche seint Iame · and seyntys of Rome, 48
 Wenten forth in hure way · with meny vn-wyse tales,
 And hauen leue to lye · al hure lyf-time.
 Eremytes on an hep · with hokede staues,
 Wenten to Walsyngham · and hure wenches after; 52
 Grete lobies and longe · that loth were to swynke,
 Clothede hem in copis · to be knowe fro othere,
 And made hem-selue eremytes · hure eise to haue.
 Ich fond ther frerus · alle the foure ordres, 56
 Prechyng the peple · for profit of the wombe,
 And glosynge the godspel · as hem good lykede;
 For couetise of copes · contrariede som doctors.
 Meny of this maistres · of mendinant freres, 60
 Hure monye and marchaundise · marchen to-gederes;
 Ac sutth charite hath be chapman · and chef to shryue lordes,
 Many ferlies han fallen · in a fewe ȝeres;
 Bote holy church and charite · choppe a-doun swich shryuers,
 The moste myschif on molde · mounteth vp faste. 65
 Ther preched a pardoner · as he a prest were,

And brouzt vp a bulle · with bisschopes seles,
 And seide that him-self mihte · a-soylen hem alle
 Of falsnesse and fastinge · and of vouwes I-broken. 68
 The lewede men likede him wel · and leeueth his speche,
 And comen vp knelynge · and cussedden his bulle;
 He bonchede hem with his breuet · and blered heore eijen,
 And rauhte with his ragemon · ringes and broches. 72
 Thus 3e 3iueth oure gold · glotonye to helpen,
 And leueth hit to losels · that lecherie haunten.
 Weore the bisschop i-blesset · and worth bothe his eres,

Brouzte forth a bulle · with bishopes seles,
 And seide that hym-self myzte · assoilen hem alle
 Of falshed of fastyng · of vowes ybroken.
 Lewed men leued hym wel · and lyked his wordes, 72
 Comen vp knelyng · to kissen his bulles;
 He bonched hem with his breuet · and blered here eyes,
 And rauzte with his ragman · rynges and broches.
 Thus they geuen here golde · glotones to kepe, 76
 And leueth such loseles · that lecherye haunten.
 Were the bischop yblissed · and worth bothe his eres,
 His seel shulde nouzt be sent · to deceyue the peple.
 Ac it is nauzt by the bischop · that the boy precheth, 80
 For the parisch prest and the pardonere · parten the siluer,
 That the poraille of the parisch · sholde haue 3if thei nere.
 Persones and parisch prestes · pleynd hem to the bischop,
 That here parishes were pore · sith the pestilence tyme, 84
 To haue a lycence and a leue · at London to dwelle,
 And syngen there for symonye · for siluer is swete.
 Bischopes and bachelers · bothe maistres and doctours,
 That han cure vnder criste · and crounyng in tokne 88
 And signe that thei sholden · shryuen here paroschienes,
 Prechen and prey for hem · and the pore fede,
 Liggen in London · in lenten, an elles.
 Somme seruen the kyng · and his siluer tellen, 92
 In cheker and in chancerye · chalengen his dettes
 Of wardes and wardmotes · weyues and streyues.

A. 81. tyme THUD; V *em.* C. 67. broute P. 68. myzthe P.
 72. breuet IM; bulles P. eyen FMS; eye P. 73. an (*for* and) P.

Heo scholde not beo so hardi · to deceyue so the peple. 76
 Saue hit nis not bi the bisschop · that the boye precheth;
 Bote the parisch prest and he · de-parte the seluer,
 That haue schulde the pore parisschens · ȝif that heo ne weore.
 Persones and parisch prestes · playneth to heore bisschops, 80
 That heore parisch hath ben pore · seththe the pestilence tyme,
 And asketh leue and lycence · at Londun to dwelle,
 To singe ther for simonye · for seluer is swete.

[*Compare A. PROL. 90-95, p. 18.*]

And brouȝte forth a bulle · with bisshopis seles,
 And seide that hym-selue · myȝte asoilie hem alle 68
 Of falsnesse of fastingés · of vowes to-broke.
 Lewede men lȳuede hym wel · and likeden hus wordes,
 Comen and kneleden · to kyssen his bulles;
 He blessede hem with hus breuet · and blerede hure eyen, 72
 And raghte with hus rageman · rynges and broches.
 Thus ȝe ȝeueth ȝoure golde · glotones to helpe,
 And leneth it to loreles · that lecherie haunten.
 Were the bisshop blessid · other worth bothe hus eren, 76
 Hus sele sholde noȝt be sent · in deceit of the puple.
 Ac it ys noȝt by the bysshop · that the boye precheth,
 The parsheprest and the pardoner · parten the seluer,
 That poore puple in parshes · sholde haue, yf thei ne were. 80
 Persones and parsheprestes · pleynede to the bisshop,
 That hure parshens ben poore · sitthe the pestelence tyme,
 To haue licence and leue · in Londone to dwelle,
 And synge ther for symonye · for seluer ys swete. 84
 Bisshopes and bachilers · bothe maisters and doctors,
 That han cure vnder cryst · and crownynge in tokne,
 Ben chargid with holy churche · charyte to tulie,
 That is, leel loue and lif · a-mong lered and lewed; 88
 Thei lyen in Londone · in lentene, and elles.
 Somme seruen the kynge · and hus seluer tellen,
 In the chekkere and the chauncelrie · chalengynge hus dettes,
 Of wardes and of wardemotes · wayues and strayues. 92

82. parshen P. 84. for IMF; the wyle P. 87. wit P. 89. lyen FS;
 leyen P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

And some seruen as seruantz · lordes and ladyes,
And in stede of stuwardes · sytten and demen.

96

[*Compare B. x. 280-283.*]

Here messe and here matynes · and many of here oures
Arn don vndeoutlych; · drede is at the laste
Lest crist in consistorie · acorse ful manye.
I parceyued of the power · that Peter had to kepe,
To bynde and to vnbynde · as the boke telleth,
How he it left with loue · as owre lorde hight,

100

B. 99. consistorie WCO; constorie L. C. 95. herde hit P. 97. broght I;
y-set P. bounden P. 98. tol IMFS; tool P. 99. ther hangeth MFI;
hongeth there P. 100. wordle P. 104. world MF; wolde P. wryt IS;
wryt P. 105. the IMFS; P om. 109. sore P. 118. For-thi FS; For
thci P. 121. on SM; in P. *So in* L. 123. 130. hit leste MF; lofte P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

Somme aren as seneschals · and seruen othere lordes,
 And ben in stede of stywardes · and sitten and demen.
 Concience cam and acusede hem · and the comune hit herde,
 And seide, 'ydolatrie 3e soffren · in sondrye places menye, 96
 And boxes ben broght forth · i-bounden with yre,
 To vnder-take the tol · of vntrewe sacrifice.
 In menyngge of miracles · muche wex ther hangeth;
 Al the world wot wel · hit myzte nat be trywe: 100
 Ac for it profitith 3ow to porswarde · 3e prelates soffren
 That lewede men in mysbylyue · leuen and deien.
 Ich lyue wel, by oure lorde · for loue of 3oure couetyse,
 That al the world be the wors; · as holy wryt telleth 104
 What cheste, and meschaunce · to the children of Israel,
 Ful on hem that free were · thorwe two false preestes.
 For the synne of Ophni · and of Finéés hus brother,
 Thei were disconfit in bataille · and losten *Archa dei*; 108
 And, for hure 3yre sauh hem syngen · and soffrede hem don ille,
 And nozt chased hem ther-of · and wolde nozt rebukie hem,
 A-non, as it was ytold hym · that the children of Israel
 Weren disconfit in bataille · and *Archa dei* ylore, 112
 And hus sones slayen · anon he ful for sorwe
 Fro hus chaire thare he sat · and brak hus necke a-tweyne.
 And al was for veniaunce · that he but nozt hus children;
 And for they were preestes · and men of holychurche, 116
 God was wel the wrother · and tok the rathere veniaunce.
 For-thi ich seze, 3e preestes · and men of holychurche,
 That soffren men do sacrifice · and worshepen maumettes,
 And 3e sholde be here fadres · and techen hem betere, 120
 God shal take veniaunce · on alle swiche preestes
 Wel harder and grettere · on suche shrewede faderes,
 Than euere he dude on Ophni · and Finees, or on here fader,
 For 3oure shrewede suffraunce · and 3oure owene synne. 124
 3oure masse and 3oure matynes · and meny of 3oure houres
 Aren don vndeutlich · drede ys at the laste
 Leste crist in hus constorie · of 3ow a-corse menye.
 Ich parceuede of the power · that peter hadde to kepe, 128
 To bynden and vnbynden · as the boke telleth,
 How he hit lefte with loue · as oure lorde wolde,

[*Not in A-text.*]

Amonges foure vertues · the best of alle vertues,
 That cardinales ben called · and closyng ȝatis, 104
 There crist is in kyngdome · to close and to shutte,
 And to opne it to hem · and heuene blisse shewe.
 Ac of the cardinales atte Courte · that cauzt of that name,
 And power presumed in hem · a pope to make, 108
 To han that power that Peter hadde · inpugnen I nelle;
 For in loue and letterure · the eleccioun bilongeth,
 For-thi I can and can nauzte · of courte speke more.

Thanne come there a kyng · knyȝthod hym ladde, 112
 Miȝt of the comunes · made hym to regne,
 And thanne cam kynde wytte · and clerkes he made,
 For to conseille the kyng · and the comune saue.

The kyng and knyȝthode · and clergie bothe 116
 Casten that the comune · shulde hem-self fynde.

The comune contreued · of kynde witte craftes,
 And for profit of alle the poeple · plowmen ordeygned,
 To tilie and trauaile · as trewe lyf asketh. 120
 The kyng and the comune · and kynde witte the thridde
 Shope lawe and lewte · eche man to knowe his owne.

Thanne loked vp a lunatik · a lene thing with-alle,
 And knelyng to the kyng · clergealy he seyde; 124
 ‘Crist kepe the, sire kyng · and thi kyngliche,
 And leue the lede thi londe · so leute the louye,
 And for thi riȝtful rewlyng · be rewarded in heuene!’

And sithen in the eyre an hiegh · an angel of heuene 128
 Lowed to speke in latyn— · for lewed men ne coude
 Iangle ne iugge · that iustifie hem shulde,
 But suffren and seruen— · for-thi seyde the angel,
 ‘*Sum Rex, sum Princeps · neutrum fortasse deinceps;—* 132
O qui iura regis · Christi specialia regis,
Hoc quod agas melius · iustus es, esto pius!
Nudum ius a te · vestiri vult pietate;
Qualia vis metere · talia grana sere. 136
Si ius nudatur · nudo de iure melatur.
Si seritur pietas · de pietate metas!’

C. 134. cauzt MFI; chaut P.
 140. muche MF; meche P.

135. An (*for* And) P. 138. quaht P.
 141. kynde; *miswritten* a kynde P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

Amonges foure vertues · most vertuose of vertues,
 That cardinales ben callid · and closynde ȝates, 132
 Ther crist is in kyngdome · to closye with heuene.
 Ac of the cardinales at court · that cauȝt han such a name,
 And power presumen in hem-self · a pope to make,
 To haue the power that Peter hadde · repugnen ich nelle; 136
 For in loue and in letterure · lith the grete eleccion;
 Countrepleide it noȝt, quath Conscience · ‘for holy churches sake.’

Thanne cam ther a kyng · knyȝt-hod hym ladde,
 The mucche myȝte of the men · made hym to regne; 140
 And thanne cam kynde witte · and clerkus he made,
 And conscience and kynde wit · and knyȝt-hod to-gederes
 Caste that the comune · sholde hure comunes fynde.
 Kyndewit and the comune · contreuede alle craftes, 144
 And for most profit to the puple · a plouh thei gonne make,
 With leel labour to lyue · whyl lif and londe lasteth.
 Than kynde wit to the kyng · and to the comune seide,

‘Crist kep the, sire kyng · and thy kynryche, 148
 And leue the lede so thy londe · that leaute the louye,
 And for thy ryȝtful ruelyng · be rewardid in heuene.’

Conscience to clergie · and to the kyng saide,
 ‘*Sum rex, sum princeps · neutrum fortasse deinceps;* 152
O qui iura regis · christi specialia regis,
Hoc ut agas melius · iustus, et esto pius!
Nudum ius a te · vestiri vult pietate,
Qualia vis metere · talia grana sere; 156
Si seritur pietas · de pietate metas.’

145. profit FME; profytable P. 146. Wit P. wyl (*for* whyl) P. lif MFS;
 lyue P. 148. sire MI; P *om.* 149. leue ISMFE; lyue P. 152. *neutrum*
 ISMFE; miswritten *uenturum* P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

Thanne greued hym a goliardeys · a glotoun of wordes,
 And to the angel an heiz · answered after, 140
'Dum rex a regere · dicatur nomen habere,
Nomen habet sine re · nisi studet iura tenere.'

And thanne gan alle the comune · crye in vers of latin,
 To the kynges conseil · construe ho-so wolde— 144
'Precepta Regis · sunt nobis vincula legis.'

With that ran there a route · of ratones at ones,
 And smale mys myd hem · mo then a thousande,
 And comen to a conseil · for here comune profit; 148
 For a cat of a courte · cam whan hym lyked,
 And ouerlepe hem lyztlich · and lauzte hem at his wille,
 And pleyde with hem perilouslych · and possed hem aboute.
 'For doute of dyuerse dredes · we dar nouzte wel loke; 152
 And ȝif we grucche of his gamen · he wil greue vs alle,
 Cracche vs, or clowe vs · and in his cloches holde,
 That vs lotheth the lyf · or he lete vs passe.
 Myzte we with any witte · his wille withstonde, 156
 We myzte be lordes aloft · and lyuen at owre ese.'

A raton of renon · most renable of tonge,
 Seide for a souereygne · help to hym-selue;—
 'I haue ysein segges,' quod he · 'in the cite of London 160
 Beren bizes ful brizte · abouten here nekkes,
 And some colers of crafty werk; · vncoupled thei wenden
 Bothe in wareine and in waste · where hem leue lyketh;
 And otherwhile thei aren elles-where · as I here telle. 164
 Were there a belle on here beiz · bi Iesu., as me thynketh,
 Men myzte wite where thei went · and awei renne!
 And rizt so,' quod that ratoun · 'reson me sheweth,
 To bugge a belle of brasse · or of b-izte syluer, 168
 And knitten on a colere · for owre comune profit,
 And hangen it vp-on the cattes hals · thanne here we mowen
 Where he ritt or rest · or renneth to playe.
 And ȝif him list for to laike · thenne loke we mowen, 172

B. 140. answered CWO; answeres LR. 147. myd W; with L. 151.
 (2nd) hem COR; LW om. C. 159. Wer P. 160. atte GES; at the MF;
 atte the P. 162. loue—lord SMFGI; oure lordes loue P. lyppe MF; lyppe P.
 168. whan SMFE; wanne P. 169. lyztliche P. 174. wit

[Compare A. PROL. 84-89; B. PROL. 210-215; p. 18.]

Conscience and the kyng · in-to the court wenten,
 Where houede an hondred · in houes of silke,
 Seriauntes hij semede · that seruen atte barre, 160
 To plede for penyes · and poundes the lawe,
 And nat for loue of oure lord · vnlose hure lyppes ones.
 Thow myzt bet mete the myst · on Maluerne hulles,
 Than gete a mom of hure mouth · til moneye be hem shewid.
 Thanne ran ther a route · of ratones, as it were, 165
 And smale mys with hem · mo than a thousand,
 Come to on counsail · for hure comune profit;
 For a cat of a court · cam whan hym lykyde, 168
 And ouer-leep hem lyztlyche · and lauhte hem at wille,
 And pleide with hem periloslich · and putte hem ther hym
 lykyde:—

‘And if we grucche of hys game · he wol greue ous sarrer,
 To hus clees clawen ows · and in hys cloches holde, 172
 That ous lotheth the lyf · er he lete ows passe.
 Myzte we with eny wyt · hus wil with-sette,
 We myzte be lordes aloft · and lyue as vs luste.’
 Tho saide a raton of renoun · most resonable of tonge, 176

‘Ich haue yseie grete syres · in cytees and in tounes
 Bere byzes of bryzt gold · al aboute hure neckes,
 And colers of crafty werke · bothe knyghtes and squiers.

Were ther a belle on hure byze · by Iesus, as me thynketh, 180
 Men myzte wite wher thei wenten · and hure wey roume.
 Ryzt so,’ quath the raton · ‘reison me shewith,
 A belle to byggen of bras · other of bryzt seluer,
 And knytte it on a coler · for oure comune profit, 184
 And honge aboute the cattys hals · thanne hure we mowe
 Wher he ryt other rest · other romyth to pleye.
 And yf hym luste for to layke · thanne loke we mowe,

(for with) P. to with-sette PEFS; but MG omit to. 175. luste MF;
 lusten PES. 180. as SMFG; PE om. 181. wher M; wer PS. 186.
 Wher SGE; Wheper MF; Wer P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

And peren in his presence · ther while hym plaie liketh,
And ȝif him wrattheth, be ywar · and his weye shonye.'

Alle this route of ratones · to this reson thei assented.
Ac tho the belle was ybouȝt · and on the beize hanged, 176
There ne was ratoun in alle the route · for alle the rewme of Fraunce,
That dorst haue ybounden the belle · aboute the cattis nekke,
Ne hangen it aboute the cattes hals · al Engelande to wyne;
And helden hem vnhardy · and here conseil le feble, 180
And leten here laboure lost · and alle here longe studye.

A mous that moche good · couthe, as me thouȝt,
Stroke forth sternly · and stode biforn hem alle,
And to the route of ratones · reherced these wordes; 184
'Thouȝ we culled the catte · ȝut sholde ther come another,
To cracchy vs and al owre kynde · thouȝ we crope vnder benches.
For-thi I conseil le alle the comune · to lat the catte worthe,
And be we neuer so bolde · the belle hym to shewe; 188
For I herde my sire seyn · is seuene ȝere ypassed,
There the catte is a kitoun · the courte is ful elyng;
That witnisseth holiwrite · who-so wil it rede,

Ve terre ubi puer rex est, &c.

For may no renke there rest haue · for ratones bi nyȝte; 192
The while he caccheth conynges · he coueite.h nouȝt owre caroyne,
But fet hym al with venesoun · defame we hym neuere.
For better is a litel losse · than a longe sorwe,
The mase amonge vs alle · thouȝ we mysse a schrewe. 196
For many mannus malt · we mys wolde destruye,
And also ȝe route of ratones · rende mennes clothes,
Nere that cat of that courte · that can ȝow ouerlepe;
For had ȝe rattes ȝowre wille · ȝe couthe nouȝt reule ȝowre-selue.
I sey for me,' quod the mous · 'I se so mykel after,
Shal neuer the cat ne the kitoun · bi my conseil le be greued,
Ne carpyng of this coler · that costed me neure.
And thouȝ it had coste me catel · biknowen it I nolde, 204
But suffre as hym-self wolde · to do as hym liketh,
Coupled and vncoupled · to cacche what thei mowe.
For-thi vche a wise wiȝte I warne · wite wel his owne.'—

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And appere in hus presence · whyle hym pleye lyketh, 188
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 That durste haue bounde the belle · a-boute the cattes necke,
 Ne haue it hongid a-boute hus hals · al Engeland to wynne;
 And leten hure labour ylost · and al hure longe trauail.
 A mous that muche good couthe · as me tho thouzte, 196
 Strok forth sturneliche · and stod by-for hem alle,
 And to the route of ratones · rehercede thuse wordes,
 ‘Thauh we hadde ycullid the catte · 3ut sholde ther come
 another,
 To cracchen ous and al oure kynde · thauh we crepe vnder
 benches. 200
 For-thi ich consaile, for comune profit · lete the cat worthe,
 And neuere be we so bold · the belle hym to shewe.
 For ich hurde my syre sayn · seuen 3er passed,
 “Ther the cat nys bote a kyton · the court is ful elynge;”
 Witnesse of holy wryt · who so can rede— 205
Ue terre ubi puer est rex: Salamon.

Ich sigge it for me,’ quath the mous · ‘ich seo so muchel after,
 Shal neuere the cat ne the kyton · by my consail, be greued,
 Ne carpen of hure colers · that costide me neuere; 208
 And thauh it costned me catel · by-knowe ich ne wolde,
 Bote soffren and sigge nouht · and so is the beste,
 Tyl myschief amende hem · that meny men chasteth.
 For meny mannys malt · we mys wolde distrye, 212
 And 3e, route of ratons · of rest men a-wake,
 Ne were the cat of the court · and 3onge kytones to-warde;
 For hadde 3e ratones 3oure reed · 3e couthe nat ruelie 3ow-selue.’

C. 188. whyle SE; wil P. 190. þe ratons PS; *but* MFGE *omit* þe. 191.
 yboughth P. on SMFG; P *om.* 193. þat durste MFS; þa þerste P.
 194. engelonnd P. 196. þouth P. 200. chracchen P. 201. For-þi F;
 For-þy SG; For þei P. 207. greuede P. 211. amenden P. hem SMFE;
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Ne hangen it aboute the cattes hals · al Engelonde to wynne;
And helden hem vnhardy · and here conseil le feble, 180
And leten here laboure lost · and alle here longe studye.

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Stroke forth sternly · and stode biforn hem alle,
And to the route of ratones · reherced these wordes; 184
'Thou3 we culled the catte · 3ut sholde ther come another,
To cracchy vs and al owre kynde · thou3 we crope vnder benches.
For-thi I conseil le alle the comune · to lat the catte worthe,
And be we neuer so bolde · the belle hym to shewe; 188
For I herde my sire seyn · is seuene 3ere ypassed,
There the catte is a kitoun · the courte is ful elyng;
That witnisseth holiwrite · who-so wil it rede,

Ve terre ubi puer rex est, &c.

For may no renke there rest haue · for ratones bi nyzte; 192
The while he caccheth conynges · he coueite.h nouzt owre caroyne,
But fet hym al with venesoun · defame we hym neuere.
For better is a litel losse · than a longe sorwe,
The mase amonge vs alle · thou3 we mysse a schrewe. 196
For many mannus malt · we mys wolde destruye,
And also 3e route of ratones · rende mennes clothes,
Nere that cat of that courte · that can 3ow ouerlepe;
For had 3e rattes 3owre wille · 3e couthe nouzt reule 3owre-selue.
I sey for me,' quod the mous · 'I se so mykel after,
Shal neuer the cat ne the kitoun · bi my conseil le be greued,
Ne carpyng of this coler · that costed me neure.
And thou3 it had coste me catel · biknowen it I nolde, 204
But suffre as hym-self wolde · to do as hym liketh,
Coupled and vncoupled · to cacche what thei mowe.
For-thi vche a wise wizte I warne · wite wel his owne.'—

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And appere in hus presence · whyle hym pleye lyketh, 188
 And yf he wratthe, we mowe be war · and hus way roume.
 Al the route of ratons · to thys reison a-sentede,
 Ac tho the belle was ybouzt · and on the byze honged,
 Ther was no raton of al the route · for al the reame of Fraunce,
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 And leten hure labour ylost · and al hure longe trauail.
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And helden hem vnhardy · and here conseil le feble, 180
And leten here laboure lost · and alle here longe studye.

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Stroke forth sternly · and stode biforn hem alle,
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For-thi I conseil le alle the comune · to lat the catte worthe,
And be we neuer so bolde · the belle hym to shewe; 188
For I herde my sire seyn · is seuene ȝere ypassed,
There the catte is a kitoun · the courte is ful elyng;
That witnisseth holiwrite · who-so wil it rede,

Ve terre ubi puer rex est, &c.

For may no renke there rest haue · for ratones bi nyȝte; 192
The while he caccheth conynges · he coueite.h nouȝt owre caroyne,
But fet hym al with venesoun · defame we hym neuere.
For better is a litel losse · than a longe sorwe,
The mase amonge vs alle · thouȝ we mysse a schrewe. 196
For many mannus malt · we mys wolde destruye,
And also ȝe route of ratones · rende mennes clothes,
Nere that cat of that courte · that can ȝow ouerlepe;
For had ȝe rattes ȝowre wille · ȝe couthe nouȝt reule ȝowre-selue.
I sey for me,' quod the mous · 'I se so mykel after,
Shal neuer the cat ne the kitoun · bi my conseil le be greued,
Ne carpyng of this coler · that costed me neure.
And thouȝ it had coste me catel · biknowen it I nolde, 204
But suffre as hym-self wolde · to do as hym liketh,
Coupled and vncoupled · to cacche what thei mowe.
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 To cracchen ous and al oure kynde · thouh we crepe vnder
 benches. 200
 For-thi ich consaile, for comune profit · lete the cat worthe,
 And neuere be we so bold · the belle hym to shewe.
 For ich hurde my syre sayn · seuen 3er passed,
 “Ther the cat nys bote a kyton · the court is ful elynges;”
 Witnesse of holy wryt · who so can rede— 205
Ue terre ubi puer est rex: Salamon.

Ich sigge it for me,’ quath the mous · ‘ich seo so muchel after,
 Shal neuere the cat ne the kyton · by my consail, be greued,
 Ne carpen of hure colers · that costide me neuere; 208
 And thauh it costned me catel · by-knowe ich ne wolde,
 Bote soffren and sigge nouht · and so is the beste,
 Tyl myschief amende hem · that meny men chasteth.
 For meny mannys malt · we mys wolde distrye, 212
 And 3e, route of ratons · of rest men a-wake,
 Ne were the cat of the court · and 3onge kytones to-warde;
 For hadde 3e ratones 3oure reed · 3e couthe nat ruelie 3ow-selue.’

C. 188. whyle SE; wil P. 190. þe ratons PS; *but* MFGE *omit* þe. 191.
 ybouzth P. on SMFG; P *om.* 193. þat durste MFS; þa þerste P.
 194. engelonnd P. 196. þouth P. 200. chracchen P. 201. For-þi F;
 For-þy SG; For þei P. 207. greuede P. 211. amenden P. hem SMFE;
 hym P. 212. For SMFG; And PE. mys MFG; myes P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

And peren in his presence · ther while hym plaie liketh,
And ȝif him wrattheth, be ywar · and his weye shonye.'

Alle this route of ratones · to this reson thei assented.
Ac tho the belle was ybouȝt · and on the beȝe hanged, 176
There ne was ratoun in alle the route · for alle the rewme of Fraunce,
That dorst haue ybounden the belle · aboute the cattis nekke,
Ne hangen it aboute the cattes hals · al Engelonde to wyne;
And helden hem vnhardy · and here conseil le feble, 180
And leten here laboure lost · and alle here longe studye.

A mous that moche good · couthe, as me thouȝte,
Stroke forth sternly · and stode biforn hem alle,
And to the route of ratones · reherced these wordes; 184
'Thouȝ we culled the catte · ȝut sholde ther come another,
To cracchy vs and al owre kynde · thouȝ we crope vnder benches.
For-thi I conseil le alle the comune · to lat the catte worthe,
And be we neuer so bolde · the belle hym to shewe; 188
For I herde my sire seyn · is seuene ȝere ypassed,
There the catte is a kitoun · the courte is ful elyng;
That witnisseth holiwrite · who-so wil it rede,

Ve terre ubi puer rex est, &c.

For may no renke there rest haue · for ratones bi nyȝte; 192
The while he caccheth conynges · he coueite.h nouȝt owre caroyne,
But fet hym al with venesoun · defame we hym neuere.
For better is a litel losse · than a longe sorwe,
The mase amonge vs alle · thouȝ we mysse a schrewe. 196
For many mannus malt · we mys wolde destruye,
And also ȝe route of ratones · rende mennes clothes,
Nere that cat of that courte · that can ȝow ouerlepe;
For had ȝe rattes ȝowre wille · ȝe couthe nouȝt reule ȝowre-selue.
I sey for me,' quod the mous · 'I se so mykel after,
Shal neuer the cat ne the kitoun · bi my conseil le be greued,
Ne carpyng of this coler · that costed me neure.
And thouȝ it had coste me catel · biknowen it I nolde, 204
But suffre as hym-self wolde · to do as hym liketh,
Coupled and vncoupled · to cacche what thei mowe.
For-thi vche a wise wiȝte I warne · wite wel his owne.'—

[*Not in A-text.*]

And appere in hus presence · whyle hym pleye lyketh, 188
 And yf he wratthe, we mowe be war · and hus way roume.
 Al the route of ratons · to thys reison a-sentede,
 Ac tho the belle was ybouzt · and on the byze honged,
 Ther was no raton of al the route · for al the reame of Fraunce,
 That durste haue bounde the belle · a-boute the cattes necke,
 Ne haue it hongid a-boute hus hals · al Engelond to wynne;
 And leten hure labour ylost · and al hure longe trauail.
 A mous that muche good couthe · as me tho thouzte, 196
 Strok forth sturneliche · and stod by-for hem alle,
 And to the route of ratones · rehercede thuse wordes,
 ‘Thauh we hadde ycullid the catte · 3ut sholde ther come
 another,
 To cracchen ous and al oure kynde · thouh we crepe vnder
 benches. 200
 For-thi ich consaile, for comune profit · lete the cat worthe,
 And neuere be we so bold · the belle hym to shewe.
 For ich hurde my syre sayn · seuen 3er passed,
 “Ther the cat nys bote a kyton · the court is ful elynge;”
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 Ne carpen of hure colers · that costide me neuere; 208
 And thauh it costned me catel · by-knowe ich ne wolde,
 Bote soffren and sigge nouht · and so is the beste,
 Tyl myschief amende hem · that meny men chasteth.
 For meny mannys malt · we mys wolde distrye, 212
 And 3e, route of ratons · of rest men a-wake,
 Ne were the cat of the court · and 3onge kytones to-warde;
 For hadde 3e ratones 3oure reed · 3e couthe nat ruelie 3ow-selue.’

C. 188. whyle SE; wil P. 190. þe ratons PS; *but* MFGE *omit* þe. 191.
 ybouzth P. on SMFG; P *om.* 193. þat durste MFS; þa þerste P.
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 For-þy SG; For þei P. 207. greuede P. 211. amenden P. hem SMFE;
 hym P. 212. For SMFG; And PE. mys MFG; myes P.

Ther houeth an hundret · in houues of selk, 84
 Seriauns hit semeth · to seruen atte barre;
 Pleden for pons · and poundes the lawe,
 Not for loue of vr lord · vn-loseth heore lippes ones.
 Thow mihtest beter meten the myst · on Maluerne hulles, 88
 Then geten a mom of heore mouth · til moneye weore schewed.
 I sauh ther bisschops bolde · and bachilers of diuyn
 Bi-coome clerkes of a-counte · the kyng for to seruen;
 Erchedekenes and deknes · that dignite hauen, 92
 To preche the peple · and pore men to feede,
 Beon lopen to londun · bi leue of heore bisschopes,
 To ben clerkes of the kynges benche · the cuntre to schende.
 Barouns and burgeis · and bonde-men also 96

What this meteles bemeneth · ȝe men that be merye, 208
 Deuine ȝe, for I ne dar · bi dere god in heuene!

ȝit houed there an hondreth · in houues of selke,
 Seriauntȝ it semed · that serueden atte barre,
 Plededen for penyes · and poundes the lawe, 212
 And nouȝt for loue of owre lorde · vnlese here lippes onis.
 Thow myȝtest better mete the myȝte · on Maluerne hulles,
 Than gete a momme of here mouthe · but money were shewed.

[Compare B. PROL. 87-94; p. 8.]

Barones an burgeis · and bonde-men als 216
 I seiȝ in this assemble · as ȝe shul here after.
 Baxsteres and brewesteres · and bocheres manye,
 Wollewebsteres · and weueres of lynnyn,
 Tailours and tynkeres · and tolleres in marketes, 220
 Masons and mynours · and many other craftes.
 Of alkin libbyng laboreres · lopen forth somme,
 As dykers and delueres · that doth here dedes ille,
 And dryuen forth the longe day · with '*Dieu vous saue, Dame*
Emme!' 224
 Cokes and here knaues · crieden, 'hote pies, hote!
 Gode gris and gees · gowe dyne, gowe!'
 Tauerners vn-til hem · tolde the same,
 'White wyn of Oseye · and red wyn of Gascoigne, 228
 Of the Ryne and of the Rochel · the roste to defye.'—
 Al this seiȝ I slepyng · and seuene sythes more.

I sau3 in that semble · as 3e schul heren her-aftur.

Bakers, bochers · and breusters monye,
 Wollene websteris · and weueris of lynen,
 Taillours, tanneris · & tokkeris bothe, 100
 Masons, minours · and mony other craftes,
 Dykers, and deluers · that don heore dedes ille,
 And driueth forth the longe day · with 'deu vous saue, dam Emme!'
 Cookes and heore knaues · cryen 'hote pies, hote! 104
 Goode gees and grys · gowe dyne, gowe!'
 Tauerners to hem · tolde the same tale
 With good wyn of Gaskoyne · and wyn of Oseye,
 Of Ruyn and of Rochel · the rost to defye. 108
 Al this I sau3 slepynge · & seue sithes more.

What this metals by-meneth · 3e men that buth murye, 216
 Diuine 3e, for ich ne dar · by dere god almy3ty!

[Compare C. I. 159-164; p. 15.]

[Compare C. I. 85-92; p. 9.]

3ut mette me more · of mene and of ryche,
 As barouns and burgeis · and bonde-men of throupes,
 Al ich sauh slepyng · as 3e shullen hure after; 220
 Bothe bakers and brywers · bouchers and othere,
 Webbesters and walkers · and wynners with handen,
 As taylours and tanners · and tyliers of erthe,
 As dikers and deluers · that don here dedes ille, 224
 And dryueth forth hure daies · with '*deux saue dame Emme!*'
 Kokes and here knaues · crieden 'hote pyes, hote!
 Good goos and grys · go we dyne, gowe!'
 Tauerners 'a tast for nouht' · tolden the same, 228
 'Whit wyn of Oseye · and of Gascoyne,
 Of the Ruele and of the Rochel wyn · the roste to defye.'
 Al this ich sauh slepynge · and seuene sythes more.

Explicit passus primus.

A. 99, 100. *These two lines are from TUD; V omits them.* 105. gouwe
 V (2nd time). 108. ad (for and) V. 109. *This line is from TUD; V
 omits it.* B. 215. monoy L. 224. longe WCO; dere L. 226. and
 WRO; a L. C. 216. Wat P. but (for buth) P. 218. mete P. 222.
 an (for 2nd and) P.

PASSUS I.

Primus passus de visione.

WHAT this mountein be-meneth · and this derke dale,
 And this feire feld, ful of folk · feire I schal ow schewe.
 A louely ladi on leor · in linnene i-clothed,
 Com a-doun from the clyf · and clepte me feire, 4
 And seide, ‘sone! slepest thou? · Sixt thou this peple
 Al hou bisy thei ben · a-boute the mase?
 The moste parti of the peple · that passeth nou on eorthe,

PASSUS I.

Passus Primus de visione.

WHAT this montaigne bymeneth · and the merke dale,
 And the felde ful of folke · I shal 3ow faire schewe.
 A loueli ladi of lere · in lynnen yclothed,
 Come down fram a castel · and called me faire, 4
 And seide, ‘Sone, slepestow · sestow this poeple,
 How bisi thei ben · abouten the mase?
 The moste partie of this poeple · that passeth on this erthe,
 Haue thei worschip in this worlde · thei wilne no better; 8
 Of other heuene than here · holde thei no tale.’
 I was aferd of her face · thei3 she faire were,
 And seide, ‘mercy, Madame · what is this to mene?’
 ‘The toure vp the toft,’ quod she · ‘Treuthe is there-inne, 12
 And wolde that 3e wrou3te · as his worde techeth;
 For he is fader of feith · fourmed 3ow alle,
 Bothe with fel and with face · and 3af 3ow fyue wittis
 Forto worschip hym ther-with · the while that 3e ben here. 16
 And therefore he hyzte the erthe · to help 3ow vchone
 Of wollen, of lynnen · of lyflode at nede,
 In mesurable manere · to make 3ow at ese;

Hauen heo worschupe in this world · kepe thei no betere; 8
Of other heuene then heer · holde thei no tale.'

Ich was a-ferd of hire face · thauh heo feir weore,
And seide, 'merci, ma dame · what is this to mene?'

'This tour and this toft,' quod heo · 'Treuthe is ther-inne, 12
And wolde that 3e wrou3ten · as his word techeth;
For he is fader of fei · that formed ow alle
Bothe with fel and with face · and 3af ow fyue wittes,
Forte worschupen him therwith · while 3e beoth heere. 16
And for he hihte the eorthe · to seruen ow vchone
Of wollene, of linnene · to lyflode at neode,
In mesurable maner · to maken ow at ese;

PASSUS II.

Incipit passus secundus.

WHAT the montayne by-meneth · and the merke dale,
And the feld ful of folke · ich shal 3ow fayre shewe.
A loueliche lady of lere · in lynnenn y-clothid,
Cam doun fro that castel · and calde me by name, 4
And seide, 'Wille, slepest thou · syxt thou this puple,
How busy thai ben · a-boute the mase?
The most partie of the puple · that passeth on this erthe,
Haue thei worship in this worlde · thei willen no betere; 8
Of other heuene than here · thei holden no tale.'
Ich was aferd of hure face · thauh hue faire were,
And saide, 'mercy, ma dame · what may thys be to mene?'
'The tour vp-on toft,' quath hue · 'Treuthe ys ther-ynne, 12
And wolde that 3e wrouhte · as hus word techeth.
For he is fader of faith · and formour of alle;
To be faith-ful to hym · he 3aue 3ow fyue wittes
For to worshepen hym ther-with · while 3e lyuen here. 16
Wherfore he het the elementes · to helpe 3ow alle tymes,
And brynge forth 3oure bylyue · bothe lynnenn and wollen,
And in mesure, thauh hit mucche were · to make 3ow at ese.

16. therwith THU; V om. C. 8. Haue IFEG; Hauded P. 11. wat P.
16. wile P. 17. Werfore P. elemens P.

And comaundet of his cortesy · in comune threo thinges; 20
 Heore nomes beth neodful · and nempnen hem I thenke,
 Bi rule and bi resun · rehersen hem her-aftur.

That on clothing is · from chele ow to saue:
 And that othur mete at meel · for meseise of thiseluen: 24
 And drink whon thou druigest · but do hit not out of resun,
 That thou worthe the worse · whon thou worche scholdest.

For Lot in his lyf-dayes · for lyking of drinke,
 Dude bi his douhtren · that the deuel louede, 28
 Dilytede him in drinke · as the deuel wolde,

And comaunded of his curteisye · in comune three thinges; 20
 Arne none nedful but tho · and nempne hem I thinke,
 And rekne hem bi resoun · reherce thow hem after.

That one is vesture · from chele the to saue,
 And mete atte mele · for myseise of thi-selue, 24
 And drynke whan thou dryest · ac do nouzt out of resoun;
 That thou worth the werse · whan thou worche shuldest.

For Loth in his lifdayes · for likyng of drynke,
 Dede bi his douztres · that the deuel lyked; 28
 Delited hym in drynke · as the deuel wolde,
 And lecherye hym lauht · and lay bi hem bothe;
 And al he witt it wyn · that wikked dede.

Inebriamus cum vino, dormiamusque cum eo,

Ut seruare possimus de patre nostro semen.

Thorw wyn and thorw women · there was Loth acombred, 32
 And there gat in glotonye · gerlis that were cherlis.
 For-thi drede delitable drynke · and thow shalt do the bettere;
 Measure is medcyne · thouz thow moche 3erne.

It is nauzt al gode to the goste · that the gutte axeth, 36
 Ne liflode to thi likam · that leef is to thi soule.

Leue not thi likam · for a lyer him techeth,
 That is the wrecched worlde · wolde the bitraye.
 For the fende and thi flesch · folweth the to-gidere, 40
 This and that sueth thi soule · and seith it in thin herte;
 And for thow sholdest ben ywar · I wisse the the beste.'

A. 26. weore V; worthe THD. 33. 3eore V; 3erne THD. B. 37.
 38. LWC *wrongly omit from that leef to likam*; RO *supply the words*. 41.
 sueth R; seest L; seeth WO; sees C. C. 22. wer P. 23. Ther P.

And lecherie him lauhete · and lay bi hem bothe;
 And al he witede hit wyn · that wikkede dede.
 Dreede dilitable drinke · and thou schalt do the bettre; 32
 Measure is medicine · thauh thou muche ȝeorne.
 Al nis not good to the gost · that the bodi lyketh,
 Ne lyfode to the licam · that leof is to the soule.
 Leef not thi licam · for lyȝere him techeth, 36
 That is the wikkede word · the to bi-traye.
 For the fend and thi flesch · folewen to-gedere,
 And schendeth thi soule · seo hit in thin herte;
 And for thou scholdest beo war · I wisse the the bettre.' 40

He comaundid of his cortesy · in comune thre thynges, 20
 Aren non nudful bote tho thre · nempnen hem ich thenke,
 And rekene hem by rewe · reherce hem wher the lyketh.
 The ferst of tho ys fode · and vesture the secounde,
 And drynke that do the good · ac drynk nat oute of tyme. 24
 Lo! Loth in hus lyue · thorw lecherouse drynke
 Wikkydlich wroghte · and wratthede god al-mygthy.
 In hus dronkenesse a day · hus douhtres he dighte,
 And lay by hem bothe · as the bok telleth. 28
 In hus glotenie he by-gat · gerles that weren churles,
 And al he wited the wyne · hus wikked dede.

*Inebriamus cum uino et dormiamus cum eo, ut seruire possimus
 de patre nostro semen . Genesis.*

Thorgh wyn and thorw wommen · ther was Loth encombred;
 For-thy dred dilitable drynke · bothe day and nyȝtes. 32
 Measure is medecyne · thauh thou muche wylne.
 Al is noȝt good to the gost · that the gut asketh,
 Ne lifode to the licame · that leof is to the saule;
 Leue noȝt thy licame · for a lyere hym techeth, 36
 That is the wrecchede worlde · that wolde the bygyle;
 For the fend and thy flesch · folwen to-gederes,
 And that seeth the saule · and seith hit the in herte,
 And wisseth the to be ware · and what wolde the deceyuye.' 40

25. drenke P. 27. dronkenesse MI; dronknesse P. 29. he MFS; P om.
 gerles I; gurles MG; P om. wereren (for weren) P. 33. is a P; the rest
 om. a. 34. gout P. 36. Leue FE; Leef IS; Lyef P. 39. seep EB;
 seþ S; seyp PG. seith F; seip EB; seyp SG; saith I; seth P.

'A madame, merci!' quath I · 'me liketh wel thi wordes.
Bote the moneye on this molde · that men so faste holden,
Tel me to whom that tresour appendeth?'

'Go to the gospel,' quath heo · 'that god seith himseluen, 44
Whon the peple him a-posede · with a peny in the temple,
ȝif heo schulden worschupe ther-with · Cesar heore kyng.

And he asked of hem · of whom spac the lettre,
And whom the ymage was lyk · that ther-inne stod. 48

"Cesar," thei seiden · "we seoth wel vchone."

Reddite ergo que sunt cesaris cesari, et que sunt dei deo.
"Thenne *Reddite*," quath God · "that to Cesar falleth,
Et que sunt dei deo · or elles do ȝe ille."

'Madame, mercy,' quod I · 'me liketh wel ȝowre wordes,
Ac the moneye of this molde · that men so faste holdeth, 44
Telle me to whom, Madame · that tresore appendeth?'

'Go to the gospel,' quod she · 'that god seide hym-seluen,
Tho the poeple hym apposed · with a peny in the temple,
Whether thei shulde ther-with · worschip the kyng Sesar. 48

And god axed of hem · of whome spake the lettre,
And the ymage ilyke · that there-inne stondeth?

"Cesaris," thei seide · "we sen hym wel vchone."

"*Reddite Cesari*," quod god · "that *Cesari* bifalleth, 52
Et que sunt dei, deo · or elles ȝe done ille."

For riȝtful reson · shulde rewle ȝow alle,

And kynde witte be wardeyne · ȝowre welthe to kepe,
And tutour of ȝoure tresore · and take it ȝow at nede; 56
For housbonderye and hij · holden togideres.'

Thanne I frained hir faire · for hym that hir made,
'That dongeoun in the dale · that dredful is of sighte,
What may it be to mene · ma-dame, I ȝow biseche?' 60

'That is the castel of care · who-so cometh therinne
May banne that he borne was · to body or to soule.

Therinne wonieth a wijte · that wrunge is ybote,
Fader of falsbed · and founded it hym-selue. 64

Adam and Eue · he egged to ille,

Conseilled Cayn · to kullen his brother;

A. 49. *Latin variation from H.* 54. *now TH; now HD; V om.* 57.
down V; *dungeon TH,D; see prol. 13.* 62. *it T; yt D; VH om.*

For rihtfoliche resoun · schulde rulen ou alle, 52
 And kuynde wit be wardeyn · oure weolthe to kepe,
 And tour of vr tresour · to take hit 3ow at nede;
 For husbondrie and he · holden to-gedere.'

Thenne I fraynede hire feire · for him that hire made, 56
 'That dungun in that deope dale · that dredful is of siht,
 What may hit mene, madame · ich the bi-seche?'

'That is the castel of care,' quod heo · 'hose cometh ther-inne,
 Mai banne that he born was · to bodi or to soule. 60
 Ther-inne woneth a wiht · Wrong is i-hote,
 Fader of falsness · he foundede it him-seluen;
 Adam and Eue · he eggede to don ille;
 Counseilede Caym · to cullen his brother; 64

'A ma dame, mercy,' quath ich · 'me lyketh wel 3oure wordes,
 Ac the moneye of this molde · that men so faste kepeth,
 Telle 3e me now to wham · that tresour by-longeth?'
 'Go to the gospel,' quath hue · 'and see what god sayde, 44
 Whanne the puple aposed hym · of a peny in the temple,
 And god askede of hem · whas was the coygne.

"Cesares," thei seiden · "sothliche we knowen."
 "*Reddite Cesari*," seide God · "that to Cesar by-falleth, 48
Et que sunt dei, deo · other ellys 3e don ille."
 For ryhtfulliche reson · sholde ruele 3ow alle,
 And kynde wit be wardeyn · 3oure welthe to kepe,
 And tutour of 3owre tresoure · and take hit 3ow atte nede; 52
 For hosboundrie and he · holdeth to-gederes.'
 Ich fraynede hure faire tho · for hym that hure made,
 'The dupe dale and durke · vn-semely to see to,
 What may hit by-mene · madame, ich by-seche?' 56
 'That is the castel of care · who-so cometh ther-ynne
 May banne that he bore was · in body and in soule;
 Ther-ynne wonyeth a wyzt · that wrong is his name,
 Fader of falshede · fond hit furst of alle; 60
 Adam and Eue · he eggede to don ille,
 Consailde Cayme · to cullen hus brother;

Iudas he iapede · with the Iewes seluer,
 And on an ellerne treo · hongede him after.
 He is a lettere of loue · and lyzeth hem alle
 That trusteth in heor tresour · ther no truthe is inne.' 68
 Thenne hedde I wonder in my wit · what wommon hit weore,
 That suche wyse wordes · of holy writ me schewede;
 And halsede hire in the heize nome · er heo theonne ȝeode,
 What heo weore witerly · that wissede me so feire. 72
 'Holi church e ic ham,' quath heo · 'thou ouhtest me to knowe:
 Ich the vnderfong furst · and thi feith the tauȝte.
 Thow brouȝtest me borwes · my bidding to worche,
 And to loue me leelly · while thi lyf durede.' 76

Iudas he iaped · with Iuwen siluer,
 And sithen on an eller · honged hym after. 68
 He is letter of loue · and lyeth hem alle,
 That trusten on his tresor · bitrayeth he sonnest.
 Thanne had I wonder in my witt · what womman it were
 That such wise wordes · of holy writ shewed; 72
 And asked hir on the hieȝe name · ar heo thennes ȝeode,
 What she were witterli · that wissed me so faire?
 'Holicherche I am,' quod she · 'thow ouȝtest me to knowe,
 I vnderfonge the firste · and the feyth tauȝte, 76
 And brouȝtest me borwes · my bidding to fulfille,
 And to loue me lelly · the while thi lyf dureth.'
 Thanne I courbed on my knees · and cryed hir of grace,
 And preyed hir pitously · prey for my synnes, 80
 And also kenne me kyndeli · on criste to bileue,
 That I miȝte worchen his wille · that wrouȝte me to man;
 'Teche me to no tresore · but telle me this ilke,
 How I may saue my soule · that seynt art yholden?' 84
 'Whan alle tresores aren tried,' quod she · 'trewthe is the best;
 I do it on *deus caritas* · to deme the sothe;
 It is as derworth a drewery · as dere god hym-seluen.
 Who-so is trewe of his tonge · and telleth none other, 88
 And doth the werkis ther-with · and wilneth no man ille,

A. 72. wisside TH₂; wysed D; techeth V. B. 81. kenne WCRO
 kende L. C. 64. An (*for* And) P. 65. ys a P; MIFGSB *om.* a. 67.
 his (*for* is) P. 69. wryȝt P. 70. halsede MIFB; halsede P. 71. witterly

Thenne knelede I on my kneos · and criȝed hire of grace,
 And preiede hire pitously · to preye for vr sunnes,
 And eke to teche me kuyndely · on crist to bi-leeue,
 That Ich his wille mihte worche · that wrouhte me to mon. 80
 'Tech me to no tresour · bote tel me this ilke,
 Hou I may saue my soule · that seint art I-holde.'

'Whon alle tresour is I-triȝed · treuthe is the beste;
 I do hit on *Deus Caritas* · to deeme the sothe. 84
 Hit is as derworthe a drurie · as deore god him-seluen.
 For hose is trewe of his tonge · telleth not elles,
 Doth his werkes ther-with · and doth no mon ille,

Iudas he by-iapede · thorgh Iewene seluer,
 And afterward he heng hym · hye on an ellerne. 64
 He ys lettare of loue · and lyeth alle tymes;
 That tryst in erthely tresour · he by-traieth sonnest,
 To en-combrye men with couetyse · that is hus kynde.,
 Thanne hadde ich wonder in my wit · what womman hue were,
 That suche wyse wordes · of holy wryt shewede; 69
 And halsede hure on the heie name · er hue thennys wente,
 What hue were witterly · that wissede me so and tauhte.
 'Holychurche ich am,' quath hue · 'thow oghtest me to knawe;
 Ich vnder-feng the formest · and fre man the made.
 Thow broghtest me borwes · my byddyng to fulfille, 74
 To leue on me and louye me · al thy lyf tyme.'
 Thanne knelede ich on my knees · and criede hure of grace,
 And preiede hure pytously · to preie for me to amende,
 Al-so to kenne me kyndelich · on crist to by-leue,
 'And teche me to no tresour · bote telle me thys ilke,
 How ich may sauy my saule · that seynt art yholde.' 80
 'Whanne alle tresours ben tried,' quath hue · 'treuthe is the beste;
 Ich do hit on *Deus caritas* · to deme the sothe.
 Hit is as derworthe a druwery · as dere god him-selue.
 For he, is trewe of hus tonge · and of hus two handes, 84
 And doth the werkes therwith · and wilneth no man ille,

IFEG; whiterly P. 72. to MIFSE; P om. 75. leue MIFSE; lyue P.
 lyf SG; lif MFE; lyue P. 76. P om. and. P om. of. 77. pytosly P.
 78. by-lyue P. 80. ert P. 81. Qwenne P. 83. hem-selue P. 84. trywe
 P; but see ll. 95, 96.

He is a-counted to the gospel · on grounde and on lofte, 88
 And eke I-liknet to vr lord · bi seint Lucus wordes.
 Clerkes that knowen hit · scholde techen hit aboute,
 For Cristene and vn-cristene · him cleymeth vchone.

Kynges and knihtes · scholde kepen hem bi reson, 92
 And rihtfuliche raymen · the realmes a-bouten,
 And take trespassours · and teizen hem faste,
 Til treuthe hedde I-termynet · the trespas to the ende.
 For Daud, in his dayes · he dubbede knihtes, 96
 Dude hem swere on heor swerd · to serue treuthe euere.
 That is the perte profession · that a-pendeth to knihtes,

He is a god bi the gospel · agrounde and aloft,
 And ylike to owre lorde · bi seynte Lukes wordes.
 The clerkes that knoweth this · shulde kenne it aboute, 98
 For cristene and vncristne · clameth it vchone.

Kynges and kniztes · shulde kepe it bi resoun,
 Riden and rappe down · in reumes aboute,
 And taken *transgressores* · and tyen hem faste, 96
 Til treuthe had ytermyned · her trespas to the ende.
 And that is the professioun appertly · that appendeth for knyȝtes,
 And nouȝt to fasten a Fryday · in fyue score wynter;
 But holden with him and with hir · that wolden al treuthe, 100
 And neuer leue hem for loue · ne for lacchyng of syluer.

For Daud in his dayes · dubbed kniztes,
 And did hem swere on here swerde · to serue trewthe euere;
 And who-so passed that poynte · was *apostata* in the ordre. 104

But criste kingene kynge · knizted ten,
 Cherubyn and seraphin · suche seuene and an-othre,
 And ȝaf hem myȝte in his maieste · the murer hem thouȝte;
 And ouer his mene meyne · made hem archangeles, 108
 Tauȝte hem bi the Trinitee · treuthe to knowe,
 To be buxome at his biddyng · he bad hem nouȝte elles.

Lucifer with legiounes · lerned it in heuene,

A. 94. teizen T; tyen H₁; teyen D; bynden V. 103. *This line, which V omits, is a made up one from H and U. The readings are:—*For crist kynge of knyȝtus · knytted somtyme H; And kyng, kyngene kyng · knyhtide tene U; And crist king of kinges · kniȝtide tene TH₁; and crist kyng of knyȝtes · knyȝted ten D. 106. *From TH₁UD; V omits this line.* 107.

And not to faste a Friday · in fyue score ȝeres,
 But holden with hem and with heore · that asken the treuthe,
 And leuen for no loue · ne lacching of ȝiftus; 101
 And he that passeth that poynt · is a-postata in the ordre.
 For crist, kyngene kyng · knyhtede tene,
 Cherubin and Seraphin · an al the foure ordres, 104
 And ȝaf hem maystrie and miht · in his maieste,
 And ouer his meyne · made hem archaungelis,
 And tauȝte hem thorw the Trinite · treuthe for to knowen,
 And beo boxum at his biddynge · he bad hem not elles. 108
 Lucifer with legiouns · lerede hit in heuene;

He is a god by the gospel · and graunty may hele,
 And like oure Lorde also · by seynt Lukys wordes.
 Clerkus that knowen thys · shoulde kennen hit a-boute, 88
 For cristene and vncristene · cleymen it echone.
 Kynges and knyȝtes · shoulde kepen hit by reson,
 Ryden and rappe a-doune · in reames a-boute,
 And take trespassours · and tyen hem faste, 92
 Til trewthe hadde ytermenyd · here trespas to the ende;
 And holde with hym and with hure · that han trewe accion,
 And for no lordene loue · leue the trewe partye.
 Trewely to take · and treweliche to fyȝte, 96
 Ys the profession and the pure ordre · that apendeth to knyȝtes;
 Who-so passeth that poynt · ys apostata of knyȝt-hod.
 For thei shoulde nat faste · ne for-bere sherte;
 Bote feithfullich defende · and fyȝte for truthe, 100
 And neuere leue for loue · in hope to lacche seluer.
 Daud by hus daies · dobbede knyȝtes,
 And dude hem swerye on here swerde · to serue truthe euere.
 Whanne god by-gan heuene · in that grete blysse, 104
 He made knyȝtes in hus court · creatures ten,
 Cherubin and seraphin · suche seuene and another;
 Lucifer louelokest tho · ac lytel while it durede.
 He was an archangel of heuene · on of godes knyȝtes; 108

hem THUD; V *om.*

B. 107. murger L.

C. 89. vncrestine P.

92. And I; And to PESG.

94. triwe P.

95. lordene I; lordes ME;

lordayne P.

96. fyȝete P; *see* l. 100.

97. pure MFESGB; poure PI.

98. Wo-so P.

aposteta P.

103. on MIFSGB; in P.

104. Wanne P.

106. P *om.* and.

107. wile P.

durede MIFSB; laste P.

He was louelokest of siht · aftur vr lord,
Til he brak boxumnes · thorw bost of him-seluen.

Thene fel he with his felawes · and fendes bi-comen, 112
Out of heuene in-to helle · hobleden faste,
Summe in the eir, and summe in the eorthe · and summe in
helle deope.
Bote Lucifer louwest · liȝth of hem alle ;

But for he brake buxumnesse · his blisse gan he tyne, 112
And fel fro that felawship · in a fendes liknes,
In-to a depe derke helle · to dwelle there for eure ;
And mo thowsandes with him · than man couthe noumbre,
Lopen out with Lucifer · in lothelich forme, 116
For thei leueden vpon hym · that lyed in this manere :
Ponam pedem in aquilone, et similis ero altissimo.

And alle that hoped it miȝte be so · none heuene miȝte hem
holde,
But fellen out in fendes liknesse · nyne dayes togideres,
Til god of his goodnesse · gan stable and stynte, 120
And garte the heuene to stekye · and stonden in quiete.

Whan thise wikked went out · wonderwise thei fellen,
Somme in eyre, somme in erthe · and somme in helle depe ;
Ac Lucifer lowest · lith of hem alle ; 124
For pryde that he pult out · his peyne hath none ende ;
And alle that worche with wronge · wenden hij shulle
After her deth day · and dwelle with that shrewe.
Ac tho that worche wel · as holiwritt telleth, 128
And enden as I ere seide · in treuthe, that is the best,
Mowe be siker that her soule · shal wende to heuene,
Ther treuthe is in Trinitee · and troneth hem alle.

C. 113. on a-lofte P.	114. þan IB ; To PEMFS.	116. sotthly P.
118. leue IFSEBG ; loyne P.	120. fuel (<i>for</i> ful) P.	123. meuen E ;

For pruide that he put out · his peyne hath non ende ; 116
 And alle that wrong worchen · wende thei schulen
 After heore deth-day · and dwellen with that schrewe.

Ac heo that worchen that word · that holi writ techeth,
 And endeth as Ich er seide · in profitable werkes, 120
 Mouwen be siker that heore soules · schullen to heuene,
 Ther treuthe is in trinite · and corouneth hem alle.

He and other with hym · that hulde nouzt with treuthe,
 Lopen out in lothliche forme · for hus false wille ;
 He hadde lust to be lyke · hus lord god almyghty.

Ponam pedem meum in aquilone, et ero similis altissimo.
 Lord! why wolde he tho · thulke wrechede Lucifer, 112
 Lepen a-lofte · in the north syde
 Than sitten in the sonne side · ther the day roweth?
 Ne were it for northerne men · a-non ich wolde telle ;
 Ac ich wolle lacke no lyf' · quath that lady sothly ; 116
 'Hit is sykerer by southe · ther the sonne regneth
 Than in the north by meny notes · no man leue other.
 For thider as the fend flegh · hus fote for to sette,
 Ther he failede and ful · and hus felawes alle ; 120
 And helle is ther he ys · and he ther ybounde.
 Euene contrarie sitteth Criste · clerkus knowen the sothe ;

Dixit dominus domino meo, sede a dextris meis.
 Ac of this matere no more · meuen ich nelle ;
 Hewes in the halyday · after hete wayten, 124
 They care nozt thaub it be cold · knaues, when thei worchen.
 In wonderwyse holy wryt · tellith how thei fullen ;
 Somme in erthe, somme in aier · somme in helle dupe,
 Ac Lucifer lowest · lith of hem alle ; 128
 For prude that hym pokede · hus peyne hath no ende.
 Alle that worchen that wikkede ys · wenden thei shulle
 After hure deth-day · and dwelle ther wrong ys ;
 And alle that han wel y-wroght · wenden they shulle 132
 Estwarde to heuene · euere to abyde,
 Ther treuthe is, the trone · that trinite ynne sitteth.

For I sigge sikerli · bi siht of the textes,
 Whon alle tresor is I-triȝet · treuthe is the beste. 124
 Lereth hit this lewed men · for lettrede hit knoweth,
 That treuthe is tresour · triedest on eorthe.'
 'Yit haue I no kuynde knowing,' quod I · 'thou most teche
 me betere,
 Bi what craft in my corps · hit cumseth, and where.' 128
 'Thou dotest daffe,' quath heo · 'dulle are thi wittes.

For-thi I sey as I seide ere · bi sizte of thise textis, 132
 Whan alle tresores arne ytried · treuthe is the beste.
 Lereth it this lewde men · for lettred men it knowen,
 That treuthe is tresore · the triest on erthe.'
 'ȝet haue I no kynde knowing,' quod I · 'ȝet mote ȝe kenne
 me better, 136
 By what craft in my corps · it comseth and where.'
 'Thow doted daffe,' quod she · 'dulle arne thi wittes;
 To litel latyn thow lernedest · lede, in thi ȝouth;

Heu michi, quod sterilem duxi vitam iuuenilem!

It is a kynde knowyng,' quod he · 'that kenneth in thine herte
 For to louye thi lorde · leuer than thi-selue;
 No dedly synne to do · dey thouȝ thow sholdest:
 This I trowe be treuthe; · who can teche the better,
 Loke thow suffre hym to sey · and sithen lere it after. 144
 For thus witnesseth his worde · worche thow there-after;
 For trewthe telleth that loue · is triacle of heuene;
 May no synne be on him sene · that vseth that spise,
 And alle his werkes he wrouȝte · with loue as him liste; 148
 And lered it Moises for the leuest thing · and moste like to heuene,
 And also the plente of pees · moste precious of vertues.

For heuene myȝte nouȝte holden it · it was so heuy of hym-self,
 Tyl it hadde of the erthe · yeten his fylle, 152
 And whan it haued of this folde · flesshe and blode taken,
 Was neuere leef vpon lynde · liȝter ther-after,
 And portatyf and persant · as the poynt of a nedle,
 That myȝte non armure it lette · ne none heiȝ walles. 156

A. 137. preche it in THH,D; prechet the V. **B.** 139. The MSS. have
quia, not *quod*. 145. worche CO; worcheth L. 150. *Read* plante.
C. 136. Than S; That PMFIE. 138. wat P. wheder I; whider B;

Hit is a kuynde knowynge · that kenneth the in herte
 For to loue thi louerd · leuere then thi-seluen;
 No dedly sunne to do · dyȝe thauȝ thou scholdest. 132
 This I trouwe beo treuthe! · hose con teche the betere,
 Loke thou suffre him to seye · and seththe teche hit forthure!
 For thus techeth us his word · (worch thou ther-aftur)
 That loue is the leuest thing · that vr lord asketh, 136
 And eke the playnt of pees; · preche it in thin harpe

Lere it thus lewede men · for lettrede hit knoweth,
 Than treuthe and trewe loue · ys no tresour bettere.' 136
 'Ich haue no kynde knowyng,' quath ich · 'ȝe mote kenne me
 bettere,
 By what wey hit wexith · and wheder out of my menyng.'
 'Thow dotede daffe,' quath hue · 'dulle aren thy wittes,
 Ich leue thow lernedist to lyte · latyn in thy ȝowthe; 140
Hec michi, quod sterilem · duxi uitam iuuenilem!
 Hit is a kynde knowyng · that kenneth in thyn herte
 For to louye thy lord · leuest of alle,
 And deye rather than to do · eny dedlich synne; 144
Melius est mori quam male uiuere.
 And this ich trowe be treuthe · who so can teche the betere,
 Loke thow soffrie hym to say · and so thow myght lerne.

For treuthe telleth that loue · ys tryacle for synne,
 And most souereyne salue · for saule and for body. 148

Loue is the plonte of pees · and most precieuse of vertues;
 For heuene holde hit ne myȝte · so heuy hit semede,
 Til hit hadde on erthe · ȝoten hym-selue.
 Was neuere lef vp-on lynde · lyghter ther-after, 152
 As whanne hit hadde of the folde · flesch and blod ytake;
 Tho was it portatyf and pershaunt · as the poynt of a nelde,
 May non armure hit lette · nother hye walles;

whodur S; wider M; wonder P. 139. dulle P. 140. lyue P. ȝoweȝe P.
 143. lueest P. 152. lygheter P. 153. wanne P. folde IB; fold M;
 Bod PS.

Ther thou art murie at thi mete · whon me biddeth the ȝedde;
For bi kuynde knowynge in herte · comseth ther a fitte.

That falleth to the fader · that formede vs alle. 140
He lokede on vs with loue · and lette his sone dye
Mekeliche for vre misdedes · forte amende vs alle.
And ȝit wolde he hem no wo · that wrouȝte him that pyne,
But mekeliche with mouthe · merci he by-souȝte, 144
To haue pite on that peple · that pynede him to dethe.
Her thou miht seon ensauple · in hymselfe one,

For-thi is loue leder · of the lordes folke of heuene,
And a mene, as the maire is · bitwene the kyng and the comune;

Riȝt so is loue a ledere · and the lawe shapeth,
Vpon man for his mysdedes · the merciment he taxeth. 160
And for to knowe it kyndely · it comseth bi myght,
And in the herte, there is the heuede · and the heiȝ welle;

For in kynde knowynge in herte · there a myȝte bigynneth.
And that falleth to the fader · that formed vs alle, 164
Loked on vs with loue · and lete his sone deye
Mekely for owre mysdedes · to amende vs alle;
And ȝet wolde he hem no woo · that wrouȝte hym that peyne,
But mekelich with mouthe · mercy he bisouȝte 168
To haue pite of that poeple · that peyned hym to deth.

Here myȝtow see ensamples · in hym-selue one,
That he was miȝtful and meke · and mercy gan graunte
To hem that hongen him an heiȝ · and his herte thirled. 172

For-thi I rede ȝow riche · haueth reuthe of the pouere;
Thouȝ ȝe be myȝtful to mote · beth meke in ȝowre werkes.

For the same mesures that ȝe mete · amys other elles,
ȝe shullen ben weyen ther-wyth · whan ȝe wende hennes; 176

Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis, remecietur vobis.

For thouȝ ȝe be trewe of ȝowre tonge · and trewliche wyne,
And as chaste as a childe · that in cherche wepeth,

A. 139. comseth U; comsith T; cumse V. 142. misdede V; misdedis THUD. 143. wrouȝte THUD; wolde V. 146. hymselfe TUD; thi-self V. 149, 150. *These lines are from THUD; V has For thi I rede the mihtful of mayn be meke of thi wordes. The Latin quotation is in H only.*

Hou he was mihtful and meke · that merci gon graunte
 To hem that beengen him heize · and his herte thurleden. 148
 For-thi I rede the riche · haue reuthe on the pore;
 Theiȝ ȝe ben miȝty to mote · beth meke of ȝour werkis;
Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis, remecietur uobis;
 For the same mesure that ȝe meten · a-mis other elles,
 ȝe schul be weyen ther-with · whon ȝe wenden hennes. 152
 For thauȝ ȝe ben trewe of tonge · and treweliche winne,
 And eke as chast as a child · that in chirche wepeth,

For-thy is loue ledere · of oure lordes folke in heuene, 156
 And a mene, as the meyere is · by-twyne the kyng and the
 comune,
 Ryȝt so is loue a ledere · and the lawe shapeth;
 Vp man for hus mysdedes · the mercement he taxeth.
 And for to knowe it kyndeliche · hit comseth by myghte, 160
 In the herte, ther is the hefd · and the hye welle.
 Of kynde knowyng in herte · ther comseth a myghte;
 That falleth to the fader · that formede ous alle.
 On ous he lokyde with loue · and let hus sone deye, 164
 Meekliche for oure mysdedes · to amendy ous alle.
 And ȝut wolde he hem no wo · that wroght hym al that tene,
 Bote myldeliche with mouhte · mercy he by-souhte,
 To haue pyte on that puple · that paynede hym to dethe. 168
 Her myȝt thow see ensample · in hym-self one,
 That he was myghtful and meke · and mercy gan graunte,
 To hem that henge hym hye · and hus herte therlede.
 For-thy ich rede ȝow ryche · haue reuthe of the poure;
 Thauh ȝe be myghty to mote · beeth meke in ȝoure workes;
 The same mesure that ȝe meteth · amys other ellys, 174
 ȝe shulleth be weyen ther-with · whanne ȝe wenden hennes;
Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis, remecietur uobis.
 Thauh ȝe be trewe of ȝoure tonge · and trewelich wyne,
 And be as chast as a chyld · that nother chit ne fyghteth, 177

C. 157. P om. a.

158. shappeþ P.

163. to IFSGB; in-to P.

166. teune P.

170. meuk P.

171. hym (for hem) P.

þorlede P.

173. meuk P.

175. wanne P.

remicietur P.

176. trywe P.

triwelich P.

Bote ȝe liuen trewely · and eke loue the pore,
 And such good as god sent · treweliche parten, 156
 ȝe naue no more merit · in masse ne in houres
 Then Malkyn of hire maydenhod · that no mon desyreth.

For Iames the gentel · bond hit in his book,
 That fey withouten fait · is febelore then nouȝt, 162
 And ded as a dore-nayl · but the deede folewe.
 Chastite withouten charite · (wite thou forsothe),
 Is as lewed as a laumpe · that no liht is inne.

Moni chapeleyns ben chast · but charite is aweye; 164
 Beo no men hardore then thei · whon heo beoth avaunset;
 Vn-kuynde to heore kun · and to alle cristene;

But if ȝe louen lelliche · and lene the poure,
 Such good as god ȝow sent · godelich parteth, 180
 ȝe ne haue na more meryte · in masse ne in houres,
 Than Malkyn of hire maydenhode · that no man desireth.

For Iames the gentil · iugged in his bokes,
 That faith with-oute the faite · is riȝte no thinge worthi, 184
 And as ded as a dore-tre · but ȝif the dedes folwe;

Fides sine operibus mortua est, &c.

For-thi chastite with-oute charite · worth cheyned in helle;
 It is as lewed as a laumpe · that no liȝte is inne.

Many chapeleynes arne chaste · ac charite is away; 188
 Aren no men auarousere than hij · whan thei ben auaunced;
 Vnkynde to her kyn · and to alle cristene,
 Chewen here charite · and chiden after more.

Such chastite with-uten charite · worth cheyned in helle! 192

Many curatoures kepen hem · clene of here bodies,
 Thei ben acombred with coueitise · thei konne nouȝt don it
 fram hem,

So harde hath auarice · yhasped hem togideres.
 And that is no treuthe of the trinite · but treccherye of helle, 196
 And lernyng to lewde men · the latter for to dele.

For-thi this wordes · ben wryten in the gospel,
Date et dabitur vobis · for I dele ȝow alle.
 And that is the lokke of loue · and lateth oute my grace, 200

A. 160. V *misreads*: treuthe withouten fey. For treuthe, D has *ſay*, and THU have *ſeith*. For *ſey*, TH₁ have *ſait*, and D has *ſeet*. 168. V *transposes* *chastite and charite*; see L. 162. 176-185. These lines are not in V. Lines

Chewen heore charite · and chiden after more!
 Such chastite withouten charite · worth claymed in helle! 168
 Curatours that schulden kepe hem · clene of heore bodies,
 Thei beoth cumbred in care · and cunnen not out-crepe;
 So harde heo beoth with auarice · i-haspet to-gedere.
 That nis no treuthe of trinite · but tricherie of helle, 172
 And a leornung for lewed men · the latere forte dele.
 For theos beth wordes i-writen · in the ewangelye,
Date et dabitur vobis · for I dele ow alle
 ȝoure grace and ȝoure good happe · ȝoure welthe for to wynne,
 And therwith knoweth me kyndely · of that I ȝou sende. 177
 That is the lok of loue · that letith out my grace

Bote yf ȝe loue leelliche · and lene the poure,
 Of such good as god sent · goodliche parte,
 ȝe haue no more meryt · in masse ne in houres, 180
 Than Malkyn of hure maidenhod · wham no man desireth.

For Iamys the gentel · iuggeth in hus bokes,
 That feith with-oute fet · ys febelere than nouht,
 And ded as a dore-nayle · bote yf the dede folwe; 184
Fides sine operibus mortua est.

Chastite with-oute charite · worth cheynid in helle;
 Hit is as lewede as a lampe · that no lyght ys ynne.

Meny chapelayns aren chast · ac charite hem faileth;
 Aren none hardur ne hongryour · than men of holy church, 188
 Auerouse and euel-willed · whanne thei ben auaused,
 And vnkynde to hure kyn · and to alle crystine;
 Thei chewen here charite · and chiden after more;

And encombred with couetyse · thei conne nat out crepe, 192
 So harde hath aueryce · hasped hem to-gederes.
 And that ys no treuthe of the trinite · bote trecherie and synne,
 And luther ensample, leue me · to the lewede puple.

For thees aren wordes · wryten in the euangelye, 196
Date et dabitur vobis · for I dele ȝow alle.
 And that is the lok of loue · that vnloseth grace,

176, 177 are in H only; the rest are from TDH,. B. 180. goed L.
 C. 178. P om. ȝe. lene to P; but MIFSGB om. to. 181. wam P. 182.
 suggeþ (for Iuggeþ) P. 189. venele (for euel) P. wanne P. 193. to-
 gedderes P. 197. P om. for I dele ȝow alle.

To counforte the carful · acumbrid with synne.
Loue is the leueste thinge · that our lord askith, 180
And eke the graith gate · that goth into heuene.
For-thi I seize as I seide er · be sizte of thise tixtes,

To confort the careful · acombred with synne.
 Loue is leche of lyf · and nexte owre lorde selue,
And also the graith gate · that goth in-to heuene ;
For-thi I sey as I seide · ere by the textis, 204
Whan alle tresores ben ytryed · treuthe is the beste.
Now haue I tolde the what treuthe is · that no tresore is bettere,
I may no lenger lenge the with · now loke the owre lorde !'

Whan alle tresouris arn trijede · treuthe is the beste. 183
 Now haue I tolde the what treuthe is · that no tresour is betere,
 I may no lengere lenge · now loke the oure lord.'

That conforteth alle cristine · encombred with synne.
 So loue ys lech of lyue · and lysse of alle peyne, 200
 And the graffe of grace · and graythest wey to heuene.
 For-thy ich may say, as ich seide · by syght of the tixt,
 Whenne alle tresours ben tryed · treuth ys the best ;
 Loue it,' quath that lady · 'lette may ich no lengere 204
 To lere the what loue ys' · and leue at me hue lauhte.

Explicit passus secundus.

C. 199. confortetth P.	200. pyne P.	201. an (<i>for</i> and) P.
graypost P. wey S; wei MF; way IB; P <i>om.</i>		203. Wenne P.
204. þe (<i>for</i> that) P.	205. wat P. P <i>om.</i> me.	

PASSUS II.

Passus secundus de visione.

YIT kneled I on my knees · and cried hire of grace,
 And seide, 'merci, madame · for Maries loue of heuene
 That bar the blisful barn · that bouzt vs on the roode,
 Teche me the kuynde craft · forte knowe the False.' 4
 'Loke on the lufthond,' quod heo · 'and seo wher he stondeth!

PASSUS II.

Passus secundus de visione, ut supra.

YET I courbed on my knees · and cryed hir of grace,
 And seide, 'mercy, madame · for Marie loue of heuene,
 That bar that blisful barne · that bouzte vs on the rode,
 Kenne me bi somme crafte · to knowe the Fals.' 4
 'Loke vpon thi left half · and lo where he standeth,
 Bothe Fals and Faue! · and here feres manye!'
 I loked on my left half · as the lady me taughte,
 And was war of a womman · wortheli yclothed, 8
 Purfiled with pelure · the finest vpon erthe,
 Y-crounede with a corone · the kyng hath non better.
 Fetislich hir fynghes · were fretted with golde wyre,
 And there-on red rubyes · as red as any glede, 12
 And diamantz of derrest pris · and double manere safferes,
 Orientales and ewages · enuenymes to destroye.
 Hire robe was ful riche · of red scarlet engreyned,
 With ribanes of red golde · and of riche stones; 16
 Hire arraye me rauysshed · suche ricchesse saw I neuere;
 I had wondre what she was · and whas wyf she were.
 'What is this womman,' quod I · 'so worthily atired?'
 'That is Mede the mayde,' quod she · 'hath noyed me ful oft, 20

A. 5. he TUD; heo V.
 (for Hu:); see l. 5. wit P.

C. 5. war P. 9. wommon P. 10. He
 11. coronede P. with FG; in PEMIS.

Bothe Fals and Fauuel · and al his hole meyne!
 I lokede on the lust half · as the ladi me tauhte;
 Thenne was I war of a wommon · wonderliche clothed, 8
 Purfylet with pelure · the ricchest vppon eorthe,
 I-corouned with a coroune · the kyng hath no better;
 Alle hir fyue fynGRES · weore frettet with rynges,
 Of the preciourest perre · that prince wered euere; 12
 In red scarlet heo rod · i-rybaunt with gold;
 Ther nis no qweene qweyntore · that quik is alyue.
 ‘What is this wommon,’ quod I · ‘thus wonderliche a-tyret?’
 ‘That is Meede the mayden,’ quod heo · ‘that hath me marred
 ofte, 16

PASSUS III.

Incipit passus tercius.

AND thanne ich knelede on my knees · and cryede to hure
 of grace,
 And seide, ‘mercy, madame · for Marye loue of heuene,
 That bar that blessedde barn · that boughte vs on the rode,
 Kenne me by som craft · to knowe the false.’ 4
 ‘Loke vpon thy lyft half,’ quath hue · ‘lo whar he standith,
 Bothe Fals and Fauel · and fykel-tonge Lyere,
 And menye of hure maners · bothe men and wommen.’
 Ich lokid on my lyft half · as the lady me tauhte, 8
 And sauh a womman as yt were · wonderlich riche clothed.
 Hue was purfild with peloure · non purere in erthe,
 And coroned with a corone · the kynge hath no betere;
 On alle hure fyue fynGRES · rycheliche yrynged, 12
 And ther-on rede rubies · and other riche stones.
 Hure robe was ryccher · than ich rede couthe,
 For to telle of hure atyre · no tyme haue ich nouth.
 Hure a-raye with hure rychesse · rauesshede myn herte; 16
 ‘Whas wyf hue were · and what was hure name,
 Leue lady,’ quath ich tho · ‘layn nat yf 3e knowen.’
 ‘That ys Mede the mayde,’ quath hue · ‘that hath noyed me ofte,

And i-lakked my lore · to lordes aboute.
 In the pope paleys heo is · as priue as my-seluen;
 And so schulde heo nouȝt · for Wrong was hir syre;
 Out of Wrong heo wox · to wrotherhele monye. 20
 Ich ouhte ben herre then heo · I com of a better.
 To-morwe worth the mariage i-mad · of Meede and of Fals;

And ylakked my lemman · that Lewte is hoten,
 And bilowen hire to lordes · that lawes han to kepe.
 In the popis paleys · she is pryue as my-self,
 But sothenesse wolde nouȝt so · for she is a bastarde. 24
 For Fals was hire fader · that hath a fykel tonge,
 And neuere sothe seide · sithen he come to erthe.
 And Mede is manered after hym · riȝte as kynde axeth;
Qualis pater, talis filius; bona arbor bonum fructum facit.

I auȝte ben herre than she · I cam of a better. 28
 Mi fader the grete god is · and grounde of alle graces,
 O god with-oute gynnyng · and I his gode douȝter,
 And hath ȝoue me mercy · to marye with my-self;
 And what man be merciful · and lelly me loue, 32
 Schal be my lorde and I his leef · in the heiȝe heuene.
 And what man taketh Mede · myne hed dar I legge,
 That he shal lese for hir loue · a lappe of *caritatis*.
 How construeth Daud the kynge · of men that taketh mede, 36
 And men of this molde · that meynuteneth treuthe,
 And how ȝe shal saue ȝow-self · the sauter bereth witnesse,
Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo, &c.

And now worth this Mede ymarried · al to a mansed schrewe,
 To one Fals Fikel-tonge · a fendes biȝete; 40
 Fauel thorw his faire speche · hath this folke enchaunted,
 And al is Lyeres ledyng · that she is thus ywedded.
 To-morwe worth ymade · the maydenes bruydale,
 And there miȝte thow wite, if thow wolt · which thei ben alle 44

A. 20. Out of THUD; In-to V.	27. wyte THUD; seo V.	B. 27.
<i>bona</i> C; <i>bonus</i> LWO.	C. 20. lemman P.	26. seilde P. P om. if.
27. kynden P.	<i>Qualis</i> EFSB; <i>Talis</i> PIM.	30. herrer P. a IFSB;

Fauel with feir speche · hath brouȝt hem to-gedere,
 And Gyle hath bi-gon hire so · heo graunteth al his wille; 24
 And al is Lizeres ledyng · that heo leuen to-gedere.

To-morwe worth the mariage i-mad · soth as I the telle,
 That thou miht wyte, ȝif thou wolt · whuche thei ben alle

And lowen vp-on my lemman · that Leaute ys hoten, 20
 And lackyd hym to lordes · that lawes han to kepe,
 In kynges court and in comune court · contrarieth my techyng.
 In the popes paleys · hue is pryuy as my-selue,
 Ac sothnesse wold noȝt so · for hue is a bastarde; 24
 On Fauel was hure fader · that hath a fykel tonge,
 And selde soth seith · bote if he souche gyle;
 And Mede ys manered after hym · as men of kynde karpn,

Qualis pater, -talis filius.

For shal neuere brere bere · beries as a vyne, 28
 Ne on croked kene thorne · kynde fygyſ wexe;

Bona arbor bonum fructum facit.

Ich ouhte be herre than hue · ich kam of a betere,
 The fader that me forth brouhte · *filius dei* he hoteth,
 That neuere lyede ne lauhwede · in al hus lyf-tyme. 32
 Ich am hus dere doucheter · duchesse of heuene;
 What man that me louyeth · and my wille folweth,
 Shal haue grace to good ynow · and a good ende;
 And what man that loueth Mede · my lyf ich dar wedde, 36
 He shal lese for hure loue · a lappe of trewe charite.
 That most helpeth men to heuene · mede most letteth,
 Ich do hit vpon Daudid · the doumbe wol noȝt lye;

Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo, et cetera.

Daudid vn-doth hit hym-self · as the dumbe sheweth, 40

Et super innocentem munera non accepit.

To-morwe worth Mede wedded · to a mansed wrecche,
 To on Fals Faithles · of the feendes kynne.
 Fauel thorgh his flateryng speche · hath Mede foule enchantid,
 And al is Lyers ledyng · that lady is thus ywedded. 44
 Soffre now and thow shalt see · suche as ben apaiede,
 That Mede ys thus ymaryed · to-morwe thow shalt asprie.
 Know hym wel, yf thow kanst · and kep the fro hem alle

That longith to that lordschipe · the lasse and the more. 28
 Know hem there ȝif thou canst · and kepe the fro hem alle,
 ȝif thou wilnest to wone · with treuthe in his blisse;
 Lerne his lawe that is so lele · and siththe teche it further.
 I may no lengore lette · vr lord ich the bi-kenne; 32
 And bi-come a good mon · for eny couetyse, ich rede.
 When heo was me fro · I loked and byhelde
 Alle this riche retenaunce · that regneden with Fals
 Weoren bede to the bruyt-ale · on bo two the sydes. 36
 Sir Symonye is of-sent · to asseale the chartres,
 That Fals othur Fauuel · bi eny fyn heolden,
 And fesse Meede ther-with · in marriage for euere.

That longeth to that lordeship · the lasse and the more.
 Knowe hem there if thow canst · and kepe thi tonge,
 And lakke hem nouȝt, but lat hem worth · til lewte be iustice,
 And haue powere to punyschen hem · thanne put forth thi resoun.
 Now I bikenne the Criste,' quod she · 'and his clene moder, 49
 And lat no conscience acombren the · for coueitise of Mede.'
 Thus left me that lady · liggyng aslepe,
 And how Mede was ymarried · in meteles me thouȝt; 52
 That alle the riche retenauns · that regneth with the false
 Were boden to the bridale · on bothe two sydes,
 Of alle maner of men · the mene and the riche.
 To marie this maydene · was many man assembled, 56
 As of kniȝtes and of clerkis · and other comune poeple,
 As sysours and sompnours · shireues and here clerkes,
 Bedelles and bailliues · and brokours of chaffare,
 Forgoeres and vitailers · and vokates of the arches; 60
 I can nouȝt rekene the route · that ran aboute Mede.
 Ac Symonye and Cyuile · and sisoures of courtes
 Were moste pryue with Mede · of any men, me thouȝt.
 Ac Fauel was the first · that fette hire out of boure, 64
 And as a brokour brouȝte hir · to be with Fals enioigned.
 Whan Symonye and Cyuile · seiȝ here beire wille,
 Thei assented for siluer · to sei as bothe wolde.

A. 28-30. *These lines are from UTH₂D*; V has only l. 30, thus: Bote ȝif
 thow wilne to wone · with treuthe in his blisse. 31. *This line is in H only.*
 34. *This line is in H only.* 35. *retenaunce THUD*; *retenauntes V.* 38.

Bote ther nas halle ne hous · that miht herborwe the peple, 40
That vche feld nas ful · of folk al a-boute.

In middes on a mountayne · at midmorwe tyde
Was piht vp a paulon · a proud for the nones;
And ten thousand of tentes · i-tilled be-sydes, 44
For knihtes of cuntre · and comers aboute,
For sisours, for sumnors · for sullers, for buggers,
For lewede, for lerede · for laborers of thropes,
And for the flaterynge freeris · alle the foure orders, 48
Alle to witnesse wel · what the writ wolde,
In what manere that Meede · in mariage was i-felled;
To beo fastnet with Fals · the fyn was arered.

That louyeth hure lordsheps · lasse other more. 48

Lacke hem noȝt, bote lete hem worthe · tyl Leaute be iustice,
And haue power for to punyshe hem · then put forth thy reson
For ich by-kenne the Crist,' quath hue · 'and hus clene moder,
Encombe neuere thy conscience · for couetyse of Mede.' 52

Thus left me that lady · lyggynge a slepe.
And ich sauh how Mede was married · metyng as it were;
And al the riche retynaunce · that roteth hem on fals lyuyng
Were bede to that brudale · on bothe half the contreie, 56
Of many maner men · that were of Medes kunne;

Of knyȝtes, of clerkes · of other comune puple,
As sysours and somners · shereyues and here clerkes,
Budels and bailifs · and brokours of chaffare, 60
Forgoers and vytailers · and vokettus of the arches,
Ich kan noȝt rekenye the route · that ran a-boute Mede.

Ac Symonye and Ciuile · and sisours of contreis
Were most pryuye with Mede · of eny men, me thouȝte. 64
Ac Fauel was the ferste · that fette hure out of chambre,
And as a brocour broghte hure forth · to be ioynid with Fals.
Whanne Symonye and Cyuyle · sauh here botheres wil,
Thay assented ther-to · at seluers praier. 68

fyn THUD; peyne V. 48. *This line is in H only.* 50. I-felled H;
felfid TUD; V om. B. 59. chaffre L. C. 48. oȝer þe more. 61.
Forgoers IE; Vorgheours P. P om. the. 64. wit P. me þouȝte
MFSBG; of þe route P. 65. P om. out. 66. wit P. 67. Wanne P.

Thenne Fauuel fet hire forth · and to Fals taketh, 52
 In forwarde that Falsnesse · schal fynden hire for euere,
 To be boxum and boun · his bidding to folfulle,
 In bedde and at borde · boxum and hende,
 And as sir Symonye wol sigge · to suwen his wille. 56
 Now Symonye and Siuyle · stondeth forth bothe,
 Vn-foldyng the feffement · that Falsnes made,
 And thus bygonnen the gomes · and gradden wel hyze:

Thanne lepe Lyer forth, and seide · ‘lo here! a chartre, 68
 That Gyle with his gret othes · gaf hem togidere,’
 And preide Cyuile to se · and Symonye to rede it.
 Thanne Symonye and Cyuile · stonden forth bothe,
 And vnfoldeth the feffement · that Fals hath ymaked, 72
 And thus bigynneth thes gomes · to greden ful heiz:—

‘*Sciunt presentes et futuri, &c.*

Witeth and witnesseth · that wonieth vpon this erthe,
 That Mede is y-maried · more for here goodis,
 Than for ani vertue or fairenesse · or any free kynde. 76
 Falsenesse is faine of hire · for he wote hire riche;
 And Fauel with his fikel speche · feffeth bi this chartre
 To be prynces in pryde · and pouerte to dispise,
 To bakbite, and to bosten · and bere fals witnesse, 80
 To scorne and to scolde · and sclaundere to make,
 Vnboxome and bolde · to breke the ten hestes;—

And the erldome of enuye · and wratthe togideres,
 With the chastelet of chest · and chateryng-oute-of-resoun, 84
 The counte of coueitise · and alle the costes aboute,
 That is, vsure and auarice · alle I hem graunte,
 In bargaines and in brokages · with al the borghe of theft;—

And al the lordeship of lecherye · in lenthe and in brede, 88
 As in werkes and in wordes · and waitynges with eies,
 And in wedes and in wisshynges · and with ydel thouztes,
 There as wille wolde · and werkmanship failleth.’

A. 56. to suwen HTH; to sewen D; schewen V. 59. From HTUD;
 V omits this line. B. 87. borgthe L. 91. L wrongly inserts ne before
 wolde. wermanship L. C. 72. stoden MFG; stod P. 73. vnfeeld P.
 þat (for the) P. makede P. 75. bylyuen P. 78. shiche P. 79. Witen I;

'Hit witen and witnessen · that woneth vppon eorthe, 60
 That I, Fauuel, fesse Fals · to that mayden Meede,
 To be present in pruyde · for pore or for riche,
 With the erldam of envye · euer forto laste,
 With alle the lordschupe · of lengthe and of brede, 64
 With the kingdom of couetise · I croune hem to-gedere;
 With the yle of vsure · and auarice the false,

Thenne leep Liere forth, and seide · 'lo! here a chartre,
 That Gyle hath gyue to Falsnesse · and graunted to Mede,
 And preyth Cyuyle it to see · and Symonye it to rede.
 Thanne Symonye and Cyuyle · stoden forth bothe, 72
 And vnfeelde the fessment · that Fals hadde maked;
 Thanne sayde Symonye · that Cyuyl it herde,
 'Alle that louen and byleuen · vp lykyng of Mede,
 Leneth hit leelly · thys worth hure laste mede, 76
 That folwen Falnesse · Fauel, and Lyere,
 And me, and swiche men · that after mede wayten.

Sciant presentes et futuri: et cetera.

Witen alle and witenen · that wonen here on erthe,
 That Mede ys y-mariet · more for hure richesse 80
 Than for holynesse other hendenesse · other for hye kynde.
 Falsnesse is fayne of hure · for he wot hure riche,
 And Fauel hath with fals speche · fessed hem by this lettere
 To be prynces of prude · and pouerte to dispice, 84
 To bakbyten and to bosten · and bere fals witnesse,
 To scornie and to scolde · sclaundres to make,
 Both vnboxom and bold · to breke the ten hestes.
 The erldom of enuye · and yre he hym graunteth, 88
 With the castel of cheste · and chatering-out-of-reson;
 The countee of couetise · he consenteth to bothe,
 With vserye and auerice · and other false sleithes
 In bargeyns and in brocages · with the borghe of thufthe, 92
 And al the lordshep of lecherye · in lengthe and in brede,
 As in workes and in wordes · and waitynges of eyes,
 In wedes and in wisshynges · and with ydel thouhtes,
 Ther that wil wolde · and werkmanshup faileth. 96

Wyten B; Wetyn P. 80. P *inserts* mechel *after* hure. 82. his (*for is*) P.
 85. bagbyten P. whitnesse P. 94. P *om.* 2nd and. waitenges P.
 95. P *om.* in. wisshenges P.

Gltonye and grete othus · ich ȝiue hem i-feere,
 With alle delytes and lustes · the deuel for to serue, 68
 In al the seruyse of slouthe · I sese hem to-gedere:

To habben and to holden · and al heore heyres astur,
 With the purtinaunce of purgatorie · in-to the pyne of helle:
 ȝeldyng for this thing · at the ȝeres ende, 72
 Heore soules to Sathanas · to senden in-to pyne;
 Ther to wonen with Wrong · whil god is in heuene.'

In witnesse of whuche thing · Wrong was the furste,
 Pers the pardonere · Paulynes doctor, 76

Gltonye he gaf hem eke · and grete othes togydere, 92
 And alday to drynke · at dyuerse tauernes,
 And there to iangle and to iape · and iugge here euene cristene,
 And in fastyng-dayes to frete · ar ful tyme were.
 And thanne to sitten and soupen · til slepe hem assaille, 96
 And bredden as burgh-swyn · and bedden hem esily,
 Tyl sleuth and slepe · slyken his sides;
 And thanne wanhope to awake hym so · with no wille to amende,
 For he leueth be lost · this is here last ende. 100

And thei to haue and to holde · and here eyres after,
 A dwellyng with the deuel · and dampned be for cure,
 With al the purtenaunces of purgatorie · in-to the pyne of helle.
 ȝeldyng for this thinge · at one ȝeres ende, 104
 Here soules to Sathan · to suffre with hym peynes,
 And with him to wonye with wo · whil god is in heuene.

In witnesse of which thing · Wronge was the first,
 And Pieres the pardonere · of Paulynes doctrine, 108
 Bette the bedel · of Bokyngham-shire,
 Rainalde the reue · of Rotland sokene,
 Munde the mellere · and many moo other.
 'In the date of the deuel · this dede I assele, 112
 Bi sizte of sire Symonye · and Cyuyles leue.'

Thenne tened hym Theologie · whan he this tale herde,
 And seide to Cyuile · 'now sorwe mot thow haue,
 Such weddynges to worche · to wratthe with Treuthe; 116
 And ar this weddyng be wrouȝte · wo the bityde!

A. 76. doctor TH.; doctoure D; douhter V. 79. *From* HH.; V *omits*
this line. 85. wraththe THUD; teone V. B. 97. bredun L. 116.

Bette the budul · of Bokynghames schire,
 Rondulf the reue · of Rotelondes sokene,
 Taberes and tomblers · and tapesters fele,
 Monde the mulnere · and moni mo othure. 80
 In the date of the deuel · the deede was a-selet,
 Be siht of sir Symoni · and notaries signes.

Then teonede him Teologye · whon he this tale herde,
 And seide to Siuyle · 'serwe on thi lokkes, 84
 Such weddyng to worche · to wraththe with Truthe;
 And ar this weddyng beo wrouzt · wo the beo-tyde!

Glottenye he geueth hem · and grete othes to-gedres,
 Al day to drynke · at dyuerse tauernes,
 Ther to iangly and to iape · and iuge her emcristine,
 And fastingdayes to frete · by-for noon, and drynke 100
 With spicerie, spek ydelnesse · in veen speche, and spene,
 And suwe forth swych felaushep · tyl thei ben fallen in slewthe,
 And a-wake with wanhope · and no wil to amende,
 For he leyueth be ylost · when he hus lyf leteth: 104
 This lif to folwie Falsnesse · and folk that on hym leueth,
 After hure deth a dwelling · day with-uten ende
 In Luciferes lordshup · as thys lettere sheweth,
 With al the portinaunce of purgatorye · and the payne of helle.' 108

In witnesse of this thyng · Wrong was the ferste,
 And Peres the pardoner · of Paulynes queste,
 Bette the budele · of Banneburies sokne,
 Reynald the reue · and redyngkynges menye, 112
 Munde the mylnere · and meny mo othere.
 In the date of the deuel · this dede ys a-seled,
 By syght of syre Symonye · and Cyuyles leue.

Thanne tened hym Theologye · whenne he thys tale herde,
 And seyde to syre Symonye · 'now sorwe mote thow haue,
 Such a weddyng to worche · that wrathe myghte Treuthe. 118
 And er this weddyng be wroughte · wo to al 3oure consail!

wendynges L. C. 97. hym (*for* hem) P. 100. an (*for* and) P.
 104. wen P. 105. lyueþ P. 106. P *om.* a. 112. and þe (*for* and) P.
 116. tened IFS; tenede MG; tuemed (*sic*) P. wenne P. 117. þow
 mote P. 118. treuhþe P.

For Meede is a Iuweler · a mayden of goode,
 God graunte vs to ȝiue hire · ther Treuthe wol a-signe. 88
 And thou hast ȝiuen hire to a gilour · god ȝiue the serwe!
 The tixt telleth not so · Treuthe wot the sothe;

Dignus est operarius mercede sua;

Worthi is the werkmon · his hure to haue;
 And thou hast feffet hire with Fals · fy on thi lawe! 92
 For lechours and lyzers · lihtliche thou leeuest,
 Simonie and thi-self · schenden holichirche;

For Mede is moylere · of Amendes engendred,
 And god graunteth to gyf · Mede to Treuthe,
 And thow hast gyuen hire to a gyloure · now god gyf the sorwe!
 Thi tixt telleth the nouȝt so · Treuthe wote the sothe, 121
 For *dignus est operarius* · his hyre to haue,
 And thow hast fest hire to Fals · fy on thi lawe!
 For al by lesynges thow lyuest · and lecherouse werkes, 124
 Symonye and thi-self · schenden holicherche,

The notaries and ȝee · noyeth the peple,
 ȝe shul abiggen it bothe · bi god that me made!
 Wel ȝe witen, wernardes · but if ȝowre witte faille, 128
 That Fals is faithlees · and fikel in his werkes,
 And was a bastarde y-bore · of Belsabubbes kynne.
 And Mede is moylere · a mayden of gode,
 And myȝte kisse the kynge · for cosyn, an she wolde. 132
 For-thi worcheth bi wisdom · and bi witt also,

3e schule abygge it bothe · by god that me made,
 At oo 3eris ende · whan 3e reken schul; 96
 He and theose notaries · anuy3en the peple.
 For wel 3e witen, wernardes! · but 3if or wit fayle,
 That Fals is a faytur · a faylere of werkes,
 And a bastard i-boren · of Belsabubbes kunne. 100
 And Meede is a Iuweler · a mayden ful gent;
 Heo mihte cusse the kyng · for cosyn, 3if heo schulde.
 Worcheth bi wisdom · and bi wit aftur;

For Mede is moillere · Amendes was here dame; 120
 Thounh Fals were hure fader · and Fykel-tonge hure syre,
 Amendes was hure moder · by trewe mennes lokyng.
 With-oute hure moder Amendes · Mede may noht be wedded,
 For Treuth plyghte hure treuthe · to wedde on of hure douhteres,
 And god grauntede it were so · so that no gyle were, 125
 And thou hast ygeue hure as Gyle taughte · god 3yue the sorwe!
 For Cyuyl and thy selue · selde fulfilleth
 That god wolde were ydo · with-oute som deceite. 128
 Ich Theologie the tixt knowe · and trewe dome wytnesseth,
 That Laurens the Leuite · lyggynge on the gredire,
 Loked vp to oure lorde · and a-loud seide,
 "God, of thy grace · heuene gates opene, 132
 For ich, man, of thy mercy · mede haue deserued!"
 And syththe man may an hey · mede of god deserue,
 Hit semeth ful sothly · ryght so on erthe,
 That Mede may be wedded · to no man bote to Treuthe; 136
 And thou hast seffyde hure with Fals · fy on suche lawe!
 For thorw lesynges 3e lacchen · largeliche mede.
 That 3e nemeth and notaries · to nauht by-gynneth brynge
 Holy churche, and charite · 3e cheweth and deuoureth. 140
 3e shulle a-bygge bothe · bote 3e a-mende the sonnere.
 For wel 3e wyten, wernardes · as holy wryt telleth,
 That Fals ys faithles · the fend ys hus syre,
 And as a bastard ybore · by3ute was he neuere. 144
 And Mede ys moillere · a maiden of goode,
 Hue myghte cusse the kyng · as for hus kynswomman.
 For-thy worcheth by wisdom · and by witte al-so,

Ledeth hire to Londone · ther lawe is i-hondlet, 104
 3if eny leute wol loken · that thei liggen to-gedere,
 And 3if the Iustise wol Iugge hire · to be Ioynet with Fals.
 3it be-war of the weddyng · for witti is Treuthe;
 For Concience is of his counseil · and knoweth ou vchone;
 And 3if he fynde such defaute · that 3e with Fals holden, 109
 Hit schal bi-sitten oure soules · sore atte laste.'
 Herto assentid Syuyle · but Symonye ne wolde
 Tyle he had syluer · for his sawes and his selynge. 112
 Then fet Fauel forth · floreyne i-nowe,
 And bad Gyle go to · and 3yue gold aboute,
 And namely to this notaries · that hem non lacked;

And ledeth hire to Londoun · there lawe is yshewed,
 If any lawe wil loke · thei ligge togederes.
 And thou3 Iustices iugge hir · to be ioigned with Fals, 136
 3et beth war of weddyng · for witty is Truthe,
 And Conscience is of his conseille · and knoweth 3ow vchone;
 And if he fynde 3ow in defaute · and with the fals holde,
 It shal bisitte 3owre soules · ful soure atte laste!' 140
 Here-to assenteth Cyuile · ac Symonye ne wolde,
 Tyl he had siluer for his seruise · and also the notaries.
 Thanne fette Fauel forth · floreyne ynowe,
 And bad Gyle to gyue · golde al aboute, 144
 And namelich to the notaries · that hem none ne faille,
 And fette False-witnes · with floreyne ynowe;
 'For he may Mede amaistrye · and maken at my wille.'
 Tho this golde was gyue · grete was the thonkyng 148
 To Fals and to Fauel · for her faire 3iftes,
 And comen to conforte · fram care the Fals,
 And seiden, 'certis, sire · cesse shal we neuere
 Til Mede be thi wedded wyf · thorw wittis of vs alle. 152
 For we haue Mede amaistried · with owre mery speche,
 That she graunteth to gon · with a gode wille,
 To Londoun, to loke · 3if that the lawe wolde
 Iugge 3ow ioyntly · in ioye for euere.' 156
 Thanne was Falsenesse fayne · and Fauel as blihe,

And fesse False-witnesse · with florens I-nowe, 116
 For he may Mede a-maysteren · and make hir at his wylle ;
 For where falsenes is oft fownden · there feith fayleth.
 Thoo the gold was ȝouen · grete were the thonkes
 To False and to Fauel · for her feyre ȝyftus. 120
 Many comen, from care · to counforte the false,
 And sworn on the hoolydom · that 'cesse schul we neuere
 Or Mede be thi weddud wyf · thorouȝ witte of vs alle.
 For we han Mede a-maysterd · with oure myri wordis 124
 That heo graunteth to goo · with a good wille,
 To London, to loke · if the lawe wole
 Iugge ȝou Ioyntely · to be Ioyned for euer.'
 Thenne was Fals fayn · and Fauuel also blithe, 128

And ledeth hure to Londoun · wher lawe may declare, 148
 Yf matrimoine may be · of Mede and of Falshede.
 And thow iustices en-ioynen hem · thorgh iurers othes,
 ȝut be war of the weddyng · for wytty is Treuthe,
 And Conscience is of hus consail · and knoweth ȝow alle; 152
 And yf he fynde ȝow in defaute · and with the false holde,
 Hit shal sitte ȝoure soules · ful soure at the laste.'
 Her-to a-sentyd Cyuyle · ac Symonie ne wolde,
 Tyl he hadde seluer for the seel · and sygnes of notaries. 156
 Tho fette Fauel forth · floreyne y-nowe,
 And bad Gyle 'go gyue · gold al a-boute,
 Nameliche, to notaries · that non of hem faille ;
 And fesse Falsnesse · with floreyne ynowe, 160
 For he may Mede amaistren · with hus myry speche.'
 Tho this gold was gyuen · gret was the thonkyng
 That Fals and Fauel hadde · for here faire ȝyftes,
 And comen ful courteislich · to confort the False. 164
 Thei seide to hym softeliche · 'cesse shulle we neuere;
 Til Mede be thy wedded wyf · we wolle nouht stynte.
 For we han Mede a-maistrid · thorw oure myrye tonge,
 That hue graunteth to go · with a good wille 168
 To Londoun, and loke · yf lawe wol iuge;
 To be maried for monye · Mede hath a-sented.'
 Than was Fauel fayne · and Falsnesse blythe,

150. Iustices IFSE ; Iustice PM.

151. wedyng P.

153. P *om.* and.

156. a (*for* and) P.

160. wit P.

169. london P.

And lette sompne alle men · in cuntre a-boute,
 To arayen hem redi · bothe burgeys and schirreues,
 To weende with hem to Westmunster · to witnesse the deede.

Thenne careden heo for caples · to carien hem thider; 132
 Bote Fauuel fette forth · foles of the beste,
 And sette Meede on a schirreues bak · i-schood al newe,
 And Fals on a sysoures backe · that softly trotted;
 (For falsnes aȝeyn the feith · sisoures he defouleth, 136
 Thoruȝ comburance of couetyse · clymben aȝeyn truthe,
 That the feith is defouled · and falsly defamed,
 And falsnes is a lord i-woxe · and lyueth as hym lyketh):
 Fauel on a feyre speche · ful feyntly a-tyred; 140
 (For feire speche that is feithles · is falsnes brother;

And leten sompne alle segges · in schires aboute,
 And bad hem alle be bown · beggeres and othere,
 To wenden wyth hem to Westmynstre · to witnesse this dede. 160

Ac thanne cared thei for caplus · to kairen hem thider,
 And Fauel fette forth thanne · folus ynowe;
 And sette Mede vpon a schyreue · shodde al newe,
 And Fals sat on a sisoure · that softlich trotted, 164
 And Fauel on a flaterere · fetislich atired.

Tho haued notaries none · annoyed thei were,
 For Symonye and Cyuile · shulde on hire fete gange.

Ac thanne swore Symonye · and Cyuile bothe, 168
 That sompnoures shulde be saddled · and serue hem vchone,
 And lat apparaille this prouisoures · in palfreis wyse;—
 ‘Sire Symonye hym-seluen · shal sitte vpon here bakkes.

Denes and suddenes · drawe ȝow togideres, 172
 Erchdekenes and officiales · and alle ȝowre regystreres,
 Lat sadel hem with siluer · owre synne to suffre,
 As auoutrie and deuorses · and derne vsurye,
 To bere bischopes aboute · abroad in visytynge. 176

Paulynes pryues · for pleyntes in the consistorie,
 Shul serue my-self · that Cyuile is nempned;
 And cartesadel the comissarie · owre carte shal he lede,
 And fecchen vs vytailles · at *fornicatores*. 180

A. 135-143. *These lines are quoted from H, and those in parentheses occur in H only. V has only the one line—And Fauel on a Feir speche · Feyntliche atyret. T and D have only the two lines—*

And thus sysoures ben sompned · the false to serue,
And feire-speche Fauel · that moche folke desceyueth).

Thenne notaries none hors hedden · anuyed thei weore, 144
That Symonie and Siuile · schulden go on foote.

Thenne seide Siuile · and swor bi the roode,
That sompnors schulde ben sadelet · and seruen hem vchone ;
'And lette apparayle prouisours · on palfreis wyse, 148
Sire Symonye hym-selfe · shal sitte on here bakkis,
And alle denes and sodenes · as destreres dihten,
For thei schullen beren bisschops · and bringen hem to reste.

Paulines peple · for playntes in constorie 152
Schal seruen my-self · that Siuile hette;
Let cart-sadele vr commissarie · vr cart he schal drawe,
And fetten vr vitayles · of the fornicatours ;

And leten sompne alle segges · in eche syde a-boute, 172
And bed hem alle ben boun · beggeres and othere,
To wenden with hem to Westemynstre · hus weddyng to honoure.
Ac hakeneyes hadde thei none · bote hakeneyes to hyre;
Thenne gan Gyle borwe hors · at meny grete maistres, 176
And shope that a shereyue · sholde bere Mede
Softliche in saumbury · fram syse to syse.
Fals and Fauel · sholde fecche forth sisours,
And ride on hem and on reues · ryght faste by Mede. 180
Symonye and Cyuyle · seiden and sworn
That prestes and prouisours · sholde prelates seruen,
'And ich my-self Cyuyle · and Symonye my felawe
Wollen ryden vp-on rectours · and riche men deuoutours, 184
And notories on persons · that permuten ofte,
And on poure prouysors · and on a-peles in the arches.
Somenours and southdenes · that *supersedeas* taketh,
On hem that louyeth lecherie · lepeth vp and rydeth, 188
On executores and suche men · cometh softliche after.
And let cople the comissarie · oure cart shal he drawe,
And fecche forth oure vitailles · of *fornicatores*.

And fals sat on a sisour · þat softeliche trottide,
And fauel vpon fair speche · fetisliche atirid.

U has the same, omitting sat; H, has also two similar lines.

THUD; V omits this line.

C. 185. on IE; and PMS.

B. 165. flaterre L.

186. in IE; of MS; on P.

149. *From*

175. deuoses l.

And make Lizere a long cart · to leden alle this othure 156
 Fabulers and faytours · that on fote rennen.'

Now Fals and Fauuel · fareth forth to-gedere,
 And Meede in the middel · and al the meyne aftur.
 I haue no tome to telle · the tayl that hem folweth, 160
 Of so many maner men · that on molde liuen.

Bote Gyle was for-goere · and gyede hem alle.
 Sothnesse sauh hem wel · and seide bote luyte,
 Bote prikede on his palfrey · and passede hem alle, 164
 And com to the kynges court · and Concience tolde,
 And Concience to the kyng · carpede hit aftur.

'Now be Crist,' quod the kyng · '3if I mihte chacche
 Fals othur Fauwel · or eny of his feeres, 168

And maketh of Lyer a longe carte · to lede alle these othere,
 As freres and faitours · that on here fete rennen.'

And thus Fals and Fauel · fareth forth togideres,
 And Mede in the myddes · and alle thise men after. 184
 I haue no tome to telle · the taille that hem folweth,
 Of many maner man · that on this molde libbeth;
 Ac Gyle was forgoer · and gyed hem alle.

Sothenesse sei3 hym wel · and seide but a litel, 188
 And priked his palfrey · and passed hem alle,
 And come to the kynges courte · and Conscience it tolde,
 And Conscience to the kynge · carped it after.

'Now by Cryst,' quod the kynge · 'and I cacche myzte 192
 Fals or Fauel · or any of his feres,
 I wolde be wroke of tho wrecches · that worcheth so ille,
 And don hem hange by the hals · and alle that hem meynnteneth!
 Shal neure man of molde · meynprise the leste, 196
 But rizte as the lawe wil loke · late falle on hem alle.'

And comanded a constable · that come atte furst,
 To 'attache tho tyrauntz · for eny thyng, I hote,
 And settereth fast Falsenesse · for enykynnes 3iftes, 200
 And gurdeth of Gyles hed · and lat hym go no further.

And 3if 3e lacche Lyer · late hym nou3t ascapen

I wolde be wreken on this wrecches · that worchen so ille,
 And don hem hongen bi the hals · and al that hem meynntenen;
 Schal neuer mon vppon molde · meyntene the leste,
 But riht as the lawe loketh · let fallen of hem alle. 172

And comaunde the cunstable · that com at the furste,
 To a-tache the traytours · for eny tresour,
 Ich hote, 3e fetere Fals faste · for eny kunnes 3iftus,
 And gurdeth of Gyles hed · let him go no forther; 176
 And bringeth Meede to me · maugre hem alle.

Symonye and Siuile · I seende hem to warne,
 That holichirche for hem · worth harmet for euere.
 And 3if 3e chacche Ly3ere · let him not a-skape, 180

Maketh of Lyer a lang cart · to lede alle these' othere, 192
 As fobbes and faitours · that on hure fet rennen.'
 Thanne Fals and Fauel · ryden forth to-gederes,
 And Mede in the myddes · and alle thuse men after.
 Ich haue no tome to telle · the tail that hem folweth, 196
 Of many manere men · for Medes sake sent after;
 Ac gile was forgoere · to gyen al the puple,
 For to wisse hem the weye · and with Mede a-byde.
 Sothnesse seih hem alle · and seide bote a lytel, 200
 And priked forth on pacience · and passede hem alle,
 And cam to the kynges court; · to Conscience he tolde,
 And Conscience to the kyng · carped it after.
 'Now by Cryst,' quath the kyng · 'and ich cacche myghte 204
 Fals other Fauel · other here felawe Lyere,
 Ich wolde be wreke on tho wrecches · and on here werkus alle,
 And do hem hongy by the hals · and alle that hem maynteneth,
 Schal neuere man on this molde · maynpryse the leste, 208
 But ryght as the lawe loketh · let falle on hem alle!'
 He comaundyd a constable · that cam at the furste,
 'Go atache tho tyrauns · for eny tresour, ich hote,
 Let feterye fast Falsnesse · for eny kynnes 3iftes, 212
 And gurd of Gyles hefd · and lete hym go no wyddere,
 And brynge Mede to me · maugre hem alle.
 And if 3e lacche Lyere · let hym nat a-skapie

To ben set on the pillori · for eny preyere ;
I bydde thee awayte hem wele · let non of hem ascape.'

Dreede at the dore stood · and the dune herde,
And wihtliche wente · to warne the False, 184
And bad him faste to fle · and his feeres eke.
Thenne Fals for fere · fleih to the freeres,
And Gyle doth him to go · a-gast for to dyze ;
Bote marchaundes metten with him · and maaden him to abyden,
Bi-souzten him in heore schoppes · to sullen heore ware, 189
Apparayleden him as a prentis · the peple for to serue.
Liztliche Lyzere · leop a-vey thennes,
Lurkede thorw lones · to-logged of monye ; 192

Er he be put on the pilorye · for eny preyere, I hote ;
And bryngeth Mede to me · maugre hem alle.' 204

Drede atte dore stode · and the dome herde,
And how the kynge comaunded · constables and seriantz,
Falsenesse and his felawschip · to fettren an to bynden.
Thanne Drede went wiztliche · and warned the Fals, 208
And bad hym flee for fere · and his felawes alle.

Falsenesse for fere thanne · fleiz to the freres,
And Gyle doth hym to go · agast for to dye.
Ac marchantz mette with hym · and made hym abide, 212
And bishetten hym in here shope · to shewen here ware,
And apparailled hym as a prentice · the poeple to serue.

Liztliche Lye · lepe away thanne,
Lorkynge thorw lanes · to-lugged of manye. 216
He was nawhere welcome · for his manye tales,
Ouer-al yhowted · and yhote trusse ;
Tyl pardoneres haued pite · and pulled hym in-to house.
They wesshen hym and wyped hym · and wonden hym in cloutes,
And sente hym with seles · on sondayes to cherches, 221
And gaf pardoun for pens · poundmel aboute.

Thanne loured leches · and lettres thei sent,
That he sholde wonye with hem · wateres to loke. 224
Spiceres spoke with hym · to spien here ware,
For he couth of here craft · and knewe many gomme.
Ac mynstralles and messageres · mette with hym ones,
And helden hym an half-ȝere · and elleuene dayes. 228

He nas nouȝwher wel-come · for his mony tales,
Bote ouur-al i-hunted · and hote to trusse. 194

Pardoners hedden pite · and putten him to house,
Wosschen him and wrongen him · and wounden him in cloutes,
And senden him on Sonendayes · with seales to churches, 197
And ȝaf pardun for pons · poundmele a-boute.

This leornden this leches · and lettres him senden
For to wone with hem · watres to loke. 200

Spicers speeken with him · to a-spien heore ware,
For he kennede him in heore craft · and kneuȝ mony gummes.

Munstrals and messagers · metten with him ones,
And with-heolde him half a ȝer · and elleuene wykes. 204

Er he be put on the pullery · for eny preier, ich hote !' 216

Drede stod at the dore · and al that duene herde,
What the kynges wil was · and wyghtlyche he wente,
And bad Falsnesse to flee · and hus feren alle.
Falsnesse for fere tho · flegh to the freres, 220

And Gyle dud hym to gon · agast for to deye;
Ac marchauns metten with hym · and made hym abyde,
And shuten hym in here shoppes · to shewen here ware,
And parailed hym lyke here prentys · the puple to seruen. 224
Lyghtliche Lyere · lep a-way thennes,
Lorkynge thorw lanes · to-logged of menye.

He was nawher welcome · for hus meny tales,
Ouer-al houted out · and yhote trusse, 228

Til pardoners hadden pitte · and pullede hym to house.
Thei woshe hym and wypede hym · and wonde hym in cloutes,
And sente hym on Sonnedayes · with seeles to churches,
And ȝaf pardon for pans · pound-meel a-boute. 232

Thanne lourede leches · and letters thei senten,
That Lyer shold wony with hem · waters to loke.

Spicers to hym speke · to asprie here ware,
For he can on here crafte · and knoweth meny gommes. 236

Ac mynstrales and messagers · mette with Lyere ones,
And with-helde hym half a ȝere · and elleue dayes.

THD; him V. 204. with-heode V. B. 227. mynstalles L. C. 216.
P om. the. prior P. 218. whyghtlyche P. 220. P om. tho. 225. away
ȝo fro ȝennes P. 227. nawer wolcome P. 228. trosse P. 229. pollede P.
231. on MIFSG; in P. 232. ȝaf hym P. for MIFSEG; of P. 235.
hem (for hym) P. 237. ones MIG; one P.

Freres with feir speches · fetten him thennes ; 205
For knowynge of comers · kepten him as a frere ;
Bote he hath leue to lepen out · as ofte as him lyketh,
And is wel-come whon he wole · and woneth with hem ofte.

Freres with faire speche · fetten hym thennes,
And for knowyng of comeres · coped hym as a frere.
Ac he hath leue to lepe out · as oft as hym liketh,
And is welcome whan he wil · and woneth wyth hem oft. 232

Alle fledden for fere · and flowen in-to hernes,
Saue Mede the mayde · na mo durst abide.
Ac trewli to telle · she trembled for drede,
And ek wept and wronge · whan she was attached. 236

And alle fledden for fere · and flowen in-to huirnes; 209
 Saue Meede the mayden · no mon dorste abyde;
 But trewely to telle · heo tremblede for fere,
 And eke wepte and wrong hire hondes · whon heo was a-tachet.

Ac Freres thorw fayre speche · fetten hym thennes;
 For knowynge of comers · thei copyde hym as a frere; 240
 Ac he hath leue to lepen out · as ofte as hym lyketh,
 And ys welcome whanne he cometh · and woneth with hem ofte.
 Symonye and Cyuyle · senten to Rome,
 And putte hem thorw a-peles · in the popes grace. 244
 Ac Conscience to the kyng · a-cusede hem bothe,
 And seide, 'syre kyng, by Cryst · bote clerkus amende,
 Thi kyngdom thorw here couetyse · wol out of kynde wende,
 And holy churche thorw hem · worth harmed for euere.' 248
 Alle fledden for fere · and flowen in-to hernes;
 Saue Mede the mayde · no mo dorste a-byde.
 Ac treweliche to telle · hue tremblede for fere,
 And bothe wrang and wepte · whanne hue was a-tached. 252

Hic explicit passus iij^{us}.

C. 242. wolcome P. wanne P. 247. weynde P; see C. iv. 19. 250.
 þat (for the) P. 251. tryweliche P. 252. wanne P. atachede P.

PASSUS III.

Passus Tercius de Visione.

NOW is Meede the mayden i-nomen · and no mo 'of hem
 alle,
 With beodeles and baylyfs · i-brouht to the kyng.
 The kyng clepet a clerke · (I knowe not his nome),
 To take Meede the mayden · and maken hire at ese. 4
 'Ichulle assayen hire my-self · and sothliche aposen

PASSUS III.

Passus tertius.

NOW is Mede the mayde · and namo of hem alle
 With bedellus and with bayllyues · brouȝt bifor the kyng.
 The kyng called a clerke · can I nouȝt his name,
 To take Mede the mayde · and make hire at ese. 4
 'I shal assaye hir my-self · and sothelich appose
 What man of this molde · that hire were leueste.
 And if she worche bi my witte · and my wille folwe,
 I wil forgyue hir this gilte · so me god help!' 8
 Curteysliche the clerke thanne · as the kyng hight,
 Toke Mede bi the middel · and brouȝte hir in-to chaumbre,
 And there was myrthe and mynstralcy · Mede to plesse.
 They that wonyeth in Westmynstre · worschiped hir alle; 12
 Gentelliche with ioye · the iustices somme
 Busked hem to the boure · there the birde dwelled,
 To conforte hire kyndely · by clergise leue,
 And seiden, 'mourne nought, Mede · ne make thow no sorwe, 16
 For we wil wisse the kyng · and thi wey shape,
 To be wedded at thi wille · and where the leue liketh,

A. 3. clerke THUD; cler V. B. 17. wil R; wol W; L om.
 C. 3. ys (for hys) P. 4. þat (for the) P. 6. Wat P. 7. mennes F;

What mon in this world · that hire weore leouest.
 And ȝif heo worche be my wit · and my wil folewe,
 I schal for-ȝiue hire the gult · so me god helpe! 8
 Corteisliche the clerk tho · as the kyng hihte,
 Tok the mayden bi the middel · and brouhte hire to chaumbre.
 Ther was murthe and munstralsye · Meede with to plese;
 Heo that woneth at Westmunstre · worschipeth hire alle. 12
 Gentiliche with loye · the Iustise soone
 Busked him in-to the bour · ther the buyrde was inne,
 Cumfortede hire kuyndely · and made hire good chere,
 And seide, 'Mourne thou not, Meede, · ne make thou no serwe,
 For we wolen wysen the kyng · and thi wey schapen, 17

PASSUS IV.

Incipit passus quartus.

NOW is Mede the mayde · and no mo of hem alle
 Thorw bedeles and bailifs · brouht by-fore the kyng.
 The kyng kallid a clerk · ich can nouht hys name,
 To take Mede the mayde · and make here at ese; 4
 'Ich shal asaye hure my-self · and sothliche apose,
 What man of thys worlde · that hure is leuest haue?
 And yf hue wirche wisliche · by wys mennes counsail,
 Ich wolle for-gyue hure alle hure gultes · so me god helpe!' 8
 Cortesliche the clerk thenne · as the kyng hyghte,
 Toke Mede by the myddel · and myldeliche here broughte
 In-to boure with blysse · and by hure gan sitte.
 Ther was myrthe and mynstralcy · Mede to plesen; 12
 That wenden to Westmynstre · worshupde hure meny.
 Gentelich with ioye · iustices somme
 Buskede hem to the boure · ther this berde dwellyd,
 Confortynge hure as thei couthe · by the clerkus leue, 16
 And seyde, 'morne nat, Mede · ne make thow no sorwe;
 For we wolle wisse the kyng · and thy wey shape
 For to wende at thy wil · wher the luf lyketh,

For alle Concience craft · and casten, as I trouwe,
That thou schalt haue bothe myzt and maystrye · and make
what the liketh

With the kynge and the comyns · and the courte bothe.' 20

Mildeliche thenne Meede · merciende hem alle
Of heore grete goodnesse · and gaf hem vchone
Coupes of clene gold · and peces of seluer,
Rynges with rubyes · and richesces i-nouwe, 24
The leste man of here mayne · a mutoun of gold.

Thenne lauzten thei leue · this lordynges, at meede.
With that ther come clerkes · to cumforte the same:
'We biddeth the be blithe · for we beoth thin owne, 28
Forte worche thi wil · while vr lyf dureth.'

For al Conscience caste · or craft, as I trowe!'

Mildeliche Mede thanne · mercyed hem alle 20
Of theire gret goodnesse · and gaf hem vchone
Coupes of clene golde · and coppis of siluer,
Rynges with rubies · and ricchesses manye,
The leste man of here meyne · a motoun of golde. 24
Thanne lauzte thei leue · this lordes, at Mede.

With that comen clerkis · to conforte hir the same,
And beden hire be blithe · 'for we beth thine owne,
For to worche thi wille · the while thow myzte laste.' 28
Hendeliche heo thanne · bihight hem the same,
To 'loue 3ow lelli · and lordes to make,
And in the consistorie atte courte · do calle 3owre names;
Shal no lewdnesse lette · the leode that I louye, 32
That he ne worth first auanced · for I am biknowen
There konnyng clerkes · shul klokke bihynde.'

Thanne come there a confessoure · coped as a frere,
To Mede the mayde · he mellud this wordes, 36
And seide ful softly · in shrifte as it were,
'Thei3 lewed men and lered men · had leyne by the bothe,
And falsenesse haued yfolwed the · al this fyfty wyntre,
I shal assoille the my-selue · for a seme of whete, 40

A. 19, 20. *These lines are in H only.* 25. *From THUD; V omits this line.* 26. lauzten HD; lauzte TU; tok V. C. 20. a (*for and*) P.

Hendeliche thenne heo · be-hihte hem the same,
 To louen hem lelly · and lordes to maken,
 And in constorie at court · to tellen heore names. 32
 ‘Schal no lewednesse hem lette · the lewedeste that I loue
 That he ne worth avaunset; · for icham i-knowe
 Ther cunnynges clerkes · schul couche be-hynde.’
 Thenne com ther a confessour · i-copet as a frere; 36
 To Meede the mayden · ful mekeliche he loutede,
 And seide ful softly · in schrift as hit weore,
 ‘Thauh lerede and lewede · hedden leyn bi the alle,
 And thauz Fals hedde folewed the · this fiftene winter, 40
 I schal asoyle the my-self · for a summe of whete,

For alle Consciencies cast · and craft, as ich trowe!’ 20
 Mildeliche Mede tho · merciende hem alle
 Of hure grete goudnesse · and gaf hem echone
 Coupes of clene gold · and coppes of seluer,
 Rynges with rubies · and other riche ȝiftes, 24
 The leste man of here meyne · a moton of golde.
 Whenne thei had lauht here leue · at thys lady mede,
 Thenne comen clerkus · to comfortye hure samen,
 And beden here be blythe · ‘for we ben thyn owne, 28
 For to worche thy wil · the while we mowe dure.’
 And Mede hendiliche · by-hyht hem the same,
 To louen hem lecllich · and lordes hem make,
 ‘And porchace ȝow prouendres · while ȝoure pans lasteth, 32
 And bigge ȝow benefices · pluralite to haue,
 And in constorie atte court · do calle ȝoure names.
 Schal no lewednesse lette · the clerk that ich louye,
 That he ne worth ferst auanced · for ich am biknowe, 36
 Ther connynges clerkus · shulleth clokke by-hynde.’
 Thenne com ther a confessour · coped as a frere,
 To Mede that mayde · myldelich he sayde,
 ‘Thauh lered men and lewede · had layen by the bothe, 40
 And falshede yfoundeden the · al this fourty wynter,
 Ich shal a-soily the my-selue · for a seem of whete,

25. man I; PEMFS *om.*

26. Wenne P.

28. owne FMS; owe PG.

29. wile P.

30. Ande P.

32. prouendres MIFSE; prouenders P.

wile P.

36. biknowe MIG; knowen P.

42. of MEFS; P *om.*

And eke be thi baude · and bere wel thin ernde
Among clerkes and knihtes · concience to falle.'

Thenne Meede for hire misdede · to that mon knelede, 44
And schrof hire of hir sunnes · schomeliche, I trouwe.
Heo tolde him a tale · and tok him a noble,
For to ben hire beode-mon · and hire baude after.

Thene he asoylede hire soone · and sith to hire seide, 48
'We han a wyndow in worching · wol stonden vs ful heize :

And also be thi bedeman · and bere wel thi message,
Amonges kniȝtes and clerkis · conscience to torne.'

Thanne Mede for here mysdedes · to that man kneled,
And shroue hire of hire shrewednesse · shamelees, I trowe, 44
Tolde hym a tale · and toke hym a noble,
Forto ben hire bedeman · and hire brokour als.

Thanne he assoilled hir sone · and sithen he seyde,
'We han a wyndowe a wirchyng · wil sitten vs ful heigh : 48
Woldestow glase that gable · and graue there-inne thi name,
Siker sholde thi soule be · heuene to haue.'

'Wist I that,' quod that womman · 'I wolde nouȝt spare
For to be ȝowre frende, frere · and faille ȝow neure 52
Whil ȝe loue lordes · that lechery haunteth,
And lakketh nouȝt ladis · that loueth wel the same.
It is frelete of flesh · ȝe fynde it in bokes,
And a course of kynde · wher-of we komen alle ; 56
Who may scape the sklaundre · the skathe is sone amended ;
It is synne of the seuene · sonnest relessed.

Haue mercy,' quod Mede · 'of men that it haunte,
And I shal keure ȝowre kirke · ȝowre cloystre do maken, 60
Wowes do whiten · and wyndowes glasen,
Do peynten and purtraye · and paye for the makynge,
That eury segge shal seyn · I am sustre of ȝowre hous.'

Ac god to alle good folke · suche grauyng defendeth, 64
To writen in wyndowes · of here wel dedes,
On auenture pruyde be peynted there · and pompe of the worlde ;
For Crist knoweth thi conscience · and thi kynde wille,

A. 48. sith H ; sithen TU ; sethen D ; V *om.* B. 48. ful WCRO ;
wel L. 58. the WO ; LC *om.* 61. whiten C ; whitten L. C. 44.
knyȝthes P. 45. man MIFSG ; frere P. 48. erende EI ; ernede P.

Woldustow glase the gable · and graue therinne thi nome,
Siker schulde thi soule ben · for to dwellen in heuene.'

'Wust I that,' quod the wommon · 'ther nis nouthur wyndou
ne auter, 52

That I ne schulde maken othur mende · and my nome write,
That vche mon schulde seye · ich were suster of house.'

Bote god to alle good folk · such grauynge defendet,

And 3ut be thy bedman · and brynge a-doun conscience
A-mong kynges and kny3tes · and clerkus, if the lyke.' 44

Thenne Mede for hure mysdedes · to this man knelyd,
Shrof hure of here synnes · shameles, y leyue,

Told hym a tale · and took hym a noble

For to be hure bedman · and bere wel hure erende, 48

Among kny3tes and clerkus · conscience to turne.

And he assoiled hure sone · and setthen he seide,

'We haue a wyndow a worchyng · wol stonden ous ful hye;

Wolde 3e glase the gable · and graue ther 3oure name, 52

In masse and in matyns · for Mede we shulleth synge

Solenliche and sothlich · as for a sustre of oure ordre.'

Louelich that lady · lauhynge seyde,

'Ich shal be 3oure frende, frere · and faille 3ow neuere, 56

The while 3e louyeth thuse lordes · that lecherye haunten,

And lackieth no3t thuse ladies · that louyeth the same.

Hit is bote frelete of flesch · 3e fynden wel in bokis,

And a cours of kynde · wher-of we comen alle. 60

Ho may a-scapie the sclaundere · the scathe may sone be mendyd,

Hit ys synne as of seuene · non soner relese.

Haue mercy,' quath Mede · 'on men that hit haunten,

And ich shal keuery 3oure kirke · and 3oure cloistre maken, 64

Bothe wyndowes and woves · ich wolle a-menden and glase,

And do peynten and portreyn · who paide for the makynge

That euery seg shal see, and seye · ich am sustre of 3oure ordre.'

Ac god to alle good folke · suche grauynge defendeth, 68

To wryten in wyndowes · of eny wel dedes,

Leste prude be peyntid there · and pompe of the worlde.

For god knoweth thy conscience · and thy kynde wille,

50. assoiled IFE; soiled P. 51. worcheng P. 57. wile P. 60. wer-of P.
62. relese P. 64. ich E; i MIFSG; P om. churche P. 66. wo P.

And seith, *Nesciat sinistra quid faciat dextera.*

Lete not thi lust hond · late ne rathe, 56

Beo war what thi riht hond · worcheth or deleth ;

Bote parte hit so priueli · that pruide beo not seȝen

Nouthur in siht, ne in soule · for god him-self knoweth

Ho is corteis, or kuynde · couetous, or elles. 60

For-thi I lere ȝou, lordynges · such writynge ȝe leue,

To writen in wyndouwes · of ȝoure wel dedes,

Or to greden astur godus folk · whon ȝe ȝiuen or doles ;

Paraenture ȝe han · oure hure therfore here. 64

For vr saueour hit seith · and him-seluen precheth,

Amen dico vobis, receperunt mercedem suam ;

And thi coste and thi coueitise · and who the catel ouȝte. 68

For-thi I lere ȝow, lordes · leueth suche werkes,

To writen in wyndowes · of ȝowre wel dedes,

Or to greden after goddis men · whan ȝe delen doles ;

An auenture ȝe han ȝowre hire here · and ȝoure heuene als ; 72

Nesciat sinistra quid faciat dextra.

Lat nouȝte thi left half · late ne rathe,

Wyte what thow worchest · with thi riȝt side ;

For thus bit the gospel · gode men do here almesse.

Meires and maceres · that menes ben bitwene 76

The kyng and the comune · to kepe the lawes,

To punyschen on pillories · and pynyng stoles

Brewesteres and bakesteres · bocheres and cokes ;

For thise aren men on this molde · that moste harme worcheth 80

To the pore peple · that parcel-mele buggen.

For they poysoun the peple · priueliche and oft,

Thei rychen thorw regraterye · and rentes hem buggen

With that the pore people · shulde put in here wombe ; 84

For toke thei on trewly · thei tymbred nouȝt so heize,

Ne bouȝte non burgages · be ȝe ful certeyne.

A. 66. *This line is in H only.* 72. percel-mel TUD ; al schal V.
74. regatorie V. **B.** 73. ne WCR ; no LO. **C.** 77. hure (*for* hue) P.

Here forsothe thei fongen · her mede forth-with.

Meires and maistres · and ȝe that beoth mene
 Bitwene the kyng and the comuns · to kepe the lawes, 68
 As to punisschen on pillories · or on pynnyng stoles
 Brewesters, bakers · bochers and cookes;
 For theose be men vppon molde · that most harm worchen,
 To the pore people · that percel-mel buggen. 72

Thei punisschen the peple · priueliche and ofte,
 And recheth thorw regratorie · and rentes hem buggeth,
 With that the pore people · schulde puten in heore wombe.

For toke thei on trewely · thei timbrede not so hye, 76
 Ne bouȝte none borgages · beo ȝe certeyne.

Thi cost and here couetyse · and who the catel ouhte. 72
 For thy leue lordes loue · leueth suche wrytinges;
 God in the gospel · such grauyng noȝt a-loweth,

Nescial sinistra quid faciat dextera.

Let nat thy lyft half · oure lord techeth,
 Ywite what thow delest · with thy ryht syde. 76

ȝut Mede myldeliche · the meyre hue bysouhte—
 Bothe shereues and seriauns · and suche as kepeth lawes
 To punyshen on pillories · and on pynyng-stoles,
 As bakers and brewers · bouchers and cokes— 80
 (For thees men doth most harme · to the mene puple,
 Richen thorw regratrye · and rentes hem byggen
 With that the poure puple · sholde putten in hure womben;
 For toke they on triweliche · they tymbrid nat so heye, 84
 Nother bouhten hem burgages · be ȝe ful certayn:
 Thei haue no pite of the puple · that parcel-mele mote biggen;
 Thauh thei take hem vntydy thyng · thei hold hit no treson,
 And thauh thei fulle nat ful · that for lawe is seled, 88
 He gripeth ther-for as grete as for the grete treuthe.
 Meny sondry sorwes · in cytees fallen ofte,
 Bothe thorw fuyr and flod · and al for false puple,
 That by-gylen good men · and greueth hem wrongliche,
 The whiche cryen on hure knees · that Crist hem auenge,
 Here on thys erthe · other elles on helle, 94

83. Whit (*for* With) P. 86. pite MIFE; puteye P. 88. is seled MIFE;
 y-seelde P. 90. cyte P; citees IFE. 93. wiche P.

Bote Salamon the sage · a sarmoun he made, 84
 To a-mende meires · and men that kepeth the lawe;
 And tolde hem this teeme · that I wol telle nouthe:

Ignis deuorabit tabernacula eorum qui libenter accipiunt munera.

That so by-gyleth hem of here good; · and god on hem sendeth
 Feueres other fouler yueles · other fur on here houses,
 Moreyne other othere meschaunce · and menye tyme hit falleth,
 That innocence ys yherde · in heuene a-monge seyntes,
 That louten for hem to oure lorde · and to oure lady bothe,
 To graunten gylours on erthe · grace to amende, 100
 And haue here penaunce on pure erthe · and nozt the pyne of
 helle.

And thenne falleth ther fur · on false menne houses,
 And good menne for here gultes · gloweth on fuyr after.
 Al thys haue we seyen · that som tyme thorw a brewere 104
 Meny burgagys ben ybrent · and bodyes ther-ynne;
 And thorw a candel, clomyng · in a corsed place,
 Fel a-doun, and for-brende · forth al the rewe.
 For-thy mayres that maken free men · me thynketh that thei
 ouhten 108

For to spure and aspye · for eny speche of seluer
 What manere mester · other merchaundise he vserde,
 Er he were vnder-fonge free · and felawe in 3oure rolles.
 Hit ys nozt semly forsoth · in cyte ne in borwton, 112
 That vsurers other regratours · for eny kynne 3yftes,
 Be fraunchised for a free man · and haue a fals name)—
 Ac Mede the mayde · the meyre hue by-souhte
 Of alle suche sellers · suluer to take, 116
 Other presentes with-oute pans · and other pryueye 3yftes,
 And haue reuthe of the regratours · that han ryche hondes;

In quorum manibus iniquitates sunt: dextera eorum repleta est muneribus.

‘Loue hem for my loue’ · quath this lady Mede,
 ‘And soffre hem som tyme · to sulle a-3ens the lawe.’ 120

Salamon the sage · a sarmon he made
 In amendement of meyres · and othere stywardes,
 And witnessyth what worth of hem · that wollen take mede:

Ignis deuorabit tabernacula eorum qui libenter accipiunt munera.

Among this lewede men · this latin amounteth,
 That fuir schal falle · and brenne atte laste 88
 The houses and the homes · of hem that desyreth
 For to haue ȝiftes · in ȝouthe or in elde.
 Now beoth ȝe war, if ȝe wole · ȝe maysturs of the lawe; 91
 For the sothe schale be souȝt of ȝoure soules · so me god helpe,
 The suffraunce that ȝe suffre · such wrongus to be wrouȝt;
 While the chaunce is in ȝoure choyse · cheose ȝe the best.
 The king com from counseyl · and cleped aftur Meede,
 And of-sente hire a-swithe · seriauns hire to fette, 96

Amonge this lettered ledes · this latyn is to mene, 96
 That fyre shal falle, and brenne · al to blo asks
 The houses and the homes · of hem that desireth
 ȝiftes or ȝeresȝyues · bi-cause of here offices.
 The kynge fro conseil le cam · and called after Mede, 100
 And ofsent hir als wythe · with seriauntes manye,
 That brouȝten hir to bowre · with blisse and with ioye.
 Curteisliche the kynge thanne · comsed to telle,
 To Mede the mayde · melleth thise wordes : 104

‘Unwittily, womman ! · wrouȝte hastow oft,

Ac worse wrouȝtestow neure · than tho thou Fals toke.
 But I forgyue the that gilte · and graunte the my grace ;
 Hennes to thi deth day · do so namore ! 108

I haue a knyȝte, Conscience · cam late fro bizunde ;
 ȝif he wilneth the to wyf · wyltow hym haue ?
 ‘ȝe, lorde,’ quod that lady · ‘lorde forbede elles !

A. 91-94. *These lines are in H only.* 92. souȝte H. 98. *In H only.*
 100. melis thise TH₂; moueth these U; melodyes (*error for meleth theose*) V.
 101. Unwittily ywys T; Certis unwysely H; Qweynteliche, quath the kyng V.
 107. lord (2) TUD; god V. **B.** 97. brenne WCO; berne L. 98. that

And brouzte hire to boure · with blisse and with ioye;
 With myrthe and with mynstrasye · thei pleseden hir ychoone.
 Corteisliche the kyng · cumseth to telle,
 To Meede the mayden · meleth theose wordes : 100
 ‘Unwittily, ywys · wrouht hastou ofte;
 Bote worse wrouhtest thou neuere · then whon thou Fals toke.
 Ac I forgiue the this gult · and graunte the my grace;
 Hennes to thi deth day · do so no more. 104
 Ichauē a kniht hette Conciēce · com late from bi-ȝonde,
 ȝif he wilne the to wyf · wolt thou him haue?’
 ‘ȝe, lord,’ quath that ladi · ‘lord for-beode hit elles!

A-mong these lettrede lordes · this latyn ys to mene, 124
 That fur shal falle and for-brenne · al to blewe asks
 The houses and the homes · of hem that taken ȝyftes.
 The kynge fram consail cam · and callyd after Mede,
 And sente for to see hure · ac ich say nat hym that ladde hure. 128
 Corteisliche the kyng tho · as hus kynde wolde,
 Lackede here a litel wyht · for that hue louede gyle,
 And wilnede to be wedded · with-oute hys leue,
 Tyl Treuth hadde tolde hure · a tokne fram hymselfe; 132
 And seyde, ‘womman, vnwittylich · wrouzt hast thou ofte;
 Ich haue for-gyue the meny gultes · and my grace graunted
 Bothe to the and to thyne · in hope thou sholdest a-mende;
 And ay the lenger ich lete the go · the lasse treuthe ys with the;
 For worsse wrouhtest thou neuere · than tho thou Fals toke.
 ȝut ich for-gyue the this gult · godes for-bode eny more
 Thow tene me and Treuthe; · and thou mowe be y-take,
 In the castel of Corf · ich shal do the close 140
 Ther as an ancre · other in a wel wors wone,
 And marre the with myschef · by seint Marye my lady,
 That alle wommen wantowen · shulleth be war by the one,
 And biterliche banne the · and alle that bereth thy name, 144
 And teche the louye treuthe · and take consail of reson.
 Ich haue a knyzt, hatte Conscience · cam late froo byȝonde,
 Yf he wilneth the to wyue · wolt thou hym haue?’
 ‘ȝe, lord,’ quath the lady · ‘lord it me for-bede 148

WCRO; L om. 107. the (2) R; thee WO; L om. C. 124. these IFMS;
 thes P. 130. litel EIFM; lyte P. 131. ys (for hys) P. 133. wommen
 (wrongly) P. 139. tene me and IMFSG; tuene on P.

Bote ich holde me to oure heste · honge me sone! 108

Thenne was Concience i-clepet · to comen and apeeren
To-fore the kyng and his counsel · clerkes and othure.

Kneolyng Concience · to the kyng loutede,

To wyte what his wille were · and what he do schulde. 112

‘Woltou wedde this wommon,’ quod the kyng · ‘ȝif I wol assente?
Heo is fayn of thi felawschupe · for to beo thi make.’

‘Nay,’ quath Concience to the kyng · ‘Crist hit me forbeode!
Er ich wedde such a wyf · wo me bi-tyde! 116

Heo is frele of hire flesch · fikel of hire tonge;
Heo maketh men misdo · moni score tymes;
In trust of hire tresour · teoneth ful monye.

But I be holely at ȝowre heste · lat hange me sone! 118

And thanne was Conscience calde · to come and appiere
Bifor the kyng and his conseil · as clerkes and othere.

Knelyng Conscience · to the kyng louted,

To wite what his wille were · and what he do shulde. 116

‘Woltow wedde this womman,’ quod the kyng · ‘ȝif I wil assente,
For she is fayne of thi felawship · for to be thi make?’

Quod Conscience to the kyng · ‘Cryst it me forbede!
Ar I wedde suche a wyf · wo me bityde! 120

For she is frele of hir feith · fykel of here speche,
And maketh men mysdo · many score tymes;
Truste of hire tresore · treieth ful manye.

Wyues and widewes · wantounes she techeth, 124

And lereth hem leccherye · that loueth hire ȝiftes.

ȝowre fadre she felled · thorw fals biheste,

And hath apoysounde popis · and peired holicherche;

Is nauȝt a better baude · bi-hym that me made, 128

Bitwene heuene and helle · in erthe though men souȝte!

For she is tikil of hire taile · talwis of hir tonge,

As comune as a cartwey · to eche a knaue that walketh,

To monkes, to mynstralles · to meseles in hegges. 132

Sisoures and sompnoures · suche men hir preiseth;

Shireues of shires · were shent ȝif she nere;

A. 112. *This line is from H; TUD have a similar line; V omits it.*
B. 127. and WRO; L om. C. 149. holly IMFS; holiche P. 151. ȝs P.
154. wol IS; wolle P. 156. for-bude P; see l. 148. 160. he (for hue) P.

Wyues and widewes · wantounesse heo techeth, 120
 Lereth hem lecherie · that loueth hire ȝiftes;
 Vr fader Adam heo falde · with feire biheste;
 Apoyssende popes · and peyreth holy chirche.
 Ther nis no beter baude · (bi him that me made!) 124
 Bitwene heuene and helle · in eorthe thauȝ men souhte.
 Heo is tikel of hire tayl · talewys of hire tonge.
 As comuyn as the cart-wei · to knaues and to alle;
 To preostes, to minstrals · to mesels in hegges. 128
 Sisours and sumpnours · suche men hire preisen;
 Schirreues of schires · weore schent ȝif heo nere.

Bote ich be holly at thyn heste; · let honge me ellys!’
 Thenne was Conscience cald · to come and apeere
 By-for the kyng and hys consail · as clerkus and othere.
 Conscience knelynge · to the kyng loutede, 152
 To wite what hus wil were · and what he do sholde.
 ‘Wolt thou wedde this maide · yf ich wol assente,
 For hue ys fayne of thy felaushep · and for to be thy make?’
 Quath Conscience to the kyng · ‘Crist it me for-bede! 156
 Er ich wedde suche a wif · wo me by-tyde!
 For hue ys freel of hure faith · and fikel of hure speche,
 And maketh men mys-do · meny score tymes.
 In trist of hure tresour · hue teneth ful menye; 160
 Wyues and wodewes · wantownesse hue techeth,
 And lereth hem to lecherie · that louyeth here ȝyftes.
 ȝoure fader hue felde · Fals and hue to-gederes;
 Hue hath a-poisoned popes · hūe apeireth holy churche; 164
 Ys nauht a betere baude · by hym that me made!
 By-twyne heuene and helle · alle erthe thauh me souhte.
 For hue ys tykel of hure tail · talewys of tonge,
 As comune as the cart-wey · to knaues and to alle, 168
 To monkes and to alle men; · the meseles in heggys
 Lyggeth by hure whenne hem lust · lered and lewed.
 Sysours and somners · suche men hure preyseth,
 Shereues of shires · were shent yf hue ne were. 172

Heo doth men leosen heore lond · and heore lyues after,
 And leteth passe prisons · and payeth for hem ofte. 133
 Heo ȝeueth the iayler gold · and grotes to-gedere,
 To vn-fetere the false · and fleo where hem lyketh.
 Heo taketh the trewe bi the top · and tiȝeth him faste,
 And hongeth him for hate · that harmede neuere. 136
 Heo that ben curset in constorie · counteth hit not at a russche;
 For heo copeth the comissarie · and coteth the clerkes;
 Heo is asoyled as sone · as hire-self lyketh.
 Heo may as muche do · in a mooneth ones, 140

For she doth men lese here londe · and here lyf bothe.
 She leteth passe prisoneres · and payeth for hem ofte, 136
 And gyueth the gailers golde · and grotes togideres,
 To vnfetere the fals · fle where hym lyketh;
 And taketh the trewe bi the toppe · and tieth hym faste,
 And hangeth hym for hatred · that harme dede neure. 140
 To be cursed in consistorie · she counteth nouȝte a russhe;
 For she copeth the comissarie · and coteth his clerkis;
 She is assoilled as sone · as hir-self liketh,
 And may neiȝe as moche do · in a moneth one, 144
 As ȝowre secret seel · in syx score dayes.
 For she is priue with the pope · prouisoures it knoweth,
 For sire symonye and hir-selue · seleteth hire bulles.

She blesseth thise bisshopes · theiȝe they be lewed, 148
 Prouendreth persones · and prestes meynteneth,
 To haue lemmannes and lotebies · alle here lif-dayes,
 And bringen forth barnes · aȝein forbode lawes.
 There she is wel with the kynge · wo is the rewme, 152
 For she is fauorable to the fals · and fouleth trewthe ofte.

Bi Iesu, with here icweles · ȝowre iustices she shendeth,
 And lith aȝein the lawe · and letteth hym the gate,
 That feith may nouȝte haue his forth · here floreines go so thikke.
 She ledeth the lawe as hire list · and louedayes maketh, 157
 And doth men lese thorw hire loue · that lawe myȝte wyne,
 The mase for a mene man · thouȝ he mote hir eure.
 Lawe is so lordeliche · and loth to make ende, 160

A. 141. ȝoure TH; vre V; the U.
 were P. 177. takeþ ME; take P.

C. 176. vnfetery E; vnfeterye P.
 178. him IMG; P om. 179.

As þoure secre seal · in seuen score dayes.

Heo is priue with the pope · prouisours hit knowen;

Sir Simonie and hire-self · asselen the bulles;

Heo blessedde the bisschopes · thouȝ that thei ben lewed. 144

Prouendreres, persuns · preostes heo meyntheneth,

To holde lemmons and lotebyes · al heor lyf-dayes,

And bringeth forth barnes · aȝeyn forbodene lawes.

Ther heo is wel with the kyng · wo is the reame! 148

For heo is fauerable to Fals · and fouleth Treuthe ofte.

For hue doth men lese here londe · and here lyf bothe;

Hue leteth passe prisoners · and paieth for hem ofte,

And geueth the gailer gold · and grotes to-gederes,

To vnfetry the false · and fle where hem lyketh; 176

And taketh trewe by the top · and tieth hem faste,

And hongeth him for haterede · that harmede neuere.

To be corsed in constorye · hue counteth nauht a rusche;

Hue copeth the comissarie · and coteth hus clerkus, 180

Hue is assoilid thus sone · as hure self lyketh.

Hue may ney as moche do · in a mounthe one

As þoure secret seel · in sexscore dayes.

Hue ys priuy with the pope · prouisours it knoweth, 184

For Symonye and hure-self · seeleth hure bulles.

Hue blesseth thees byshopys · thauh thei be negh lewede,

Hue prouendreth persons · prestes hue menteyneth

To holde lemmanes and lotebyes · al here lif-dayes, 188

And bryngeth forth barnes · a-ȝens for-boden lawes;

Sunt infelices · quia matres sunt meretrices.

Ther hue ys wel wyth eny kyng · wo ys the reome,

For hue ys fauerable to Fals · that defouleth Treuthe. 192

By Iesus, with hure iewels · the iustices hue shendeth;

Hue lyth a-ȝen the lawe · and letteth hym the gate,

That faith may nat haue hus forth · hure floreines goth so thycke;

And ledeth the lawe as hure lust · and louedayes maketh, 196

Thoruh which loueday ys lost · that leaute myȝte wynne,

The mase for a mene man · thauh he mote euere.

The lawe ys so lordlich · and loth to maken ende,

constarye P. 180. comessarie P. 181. asoilid P. ase P. self SMG;
 lef P. 188. lemmanes P. 195. may IFMSG; ne may P. 197. wich P.
 198. a IMFES; þe P.

Barouns and burgeis · heo bringeth to serwe,
 Heo buggeth with heore Iuweles; · vr Iustises heo schendeth.
 Heo lihth azeyn the lawe · and letteth so faste, 153
 That feith may not han his forth · hir florins gon so thikke.
 Heo ledeth the lawe as hire luste · and loue-dayes maketh,
 The mase for a mene mon · thauȝ he mote euere.
 Lawe is so lordlich · and loth to maken ende, 156
 With-uten presentes or pons · heo pleseth ful fewe.
 Clergye an couetise · heo coupleth to-gedere.
 This is the lyf of the ladi · vr lord ȝif hire serwe! 159
 And alle that meynnteneth hire · myschaunce hem bytide!

With-oute presentz or pens · she pleseth wel fewe.

Barounes and burgeys · she bryngeth in sorwe,
 And alle the comune in kare · that coueyten lyue in trewthe;

For clergye and coueitise · she coupleth togideres. 164
 This is the lyf of that lady · now lorde ȝif hir sorwe!
 And alle that meynnteneth here men · meschaunce hem bityde!
 For pore men mowe haue no powere · to pleyne hem thouȝ
 thei smerte;
 Suche a maistre is Mede · amonge men of gode.' 168
 Thanne morned Mede · and mened hire to the kynge,
 To haue space to speke · spede if she myȝte.
 The kynge graunted hir grace · with a gode wille;
 'Excuse the, ȝif thow canst · I can namore seggen, 172
 For Conscience acuseth the · to congey the for euere.'
 'Nay, lorde,' quod that lady · 'leueth hym the worse,
 Whan ȝe wyten witterly · where the wronge liggeth;
 There that myschief is grete · Mede may helpe. 176
 And thow knowest, Conscience · I cam nouȝt to chide,

A. 156. eende V. 160. myschaunce hem bytide HTUD; vr lord ȝif hem
 care V. 161. the H; V om. C. 200. Wit P. 202. P om. and in. 207.
 custemes P. of IMFSE; and P. ȝe IMFSE; ȝat P. 211. couetyce P;

For the pore may haue no pouwer · to playne, thauȝ hem smerte,
Such a mayster is Meede · a-mong men of goode.'

Thenne mornede Meede · and menede hire to the kyng
To haue space to speken · spede ȝif heo mihte. 164

Thenne the kyng graunted hire grace · with a good wille:

'Excuse the, ȝif thou const · I con no more seye;

For Concienc hath a-cuisset the · to congeye for euere.'

'Nay, lord,' quath that ladi · 'leef him the worse 168

Whon ȝe witen witerliche · wher the wrong lihth.

Ther mischef is gret lord · Meede may helpe,

And thou knowest, Concienc · I com not to chyde,

With-oute presentes other pans · hue pleseth ful fewe. 200

Trewe burgeis and bonde · to nauht hue bringeth ofte,

And al the comune in care · and in couetyse;

Religion hue al to-reueth · and out of ruele to lybbe.

Ther nys cite vnder sonne · ne so riche reome 204

Ther hue ys loued and lete by · that last shal eny while,

With-oute werre other wo · other wicked lawes,

And customes of couetyse · the comune to distruye.

Vnsyttynge Suffraunce · hure suster, and hure-selue 208

Haue maked al-most · bote Marie the helpe,

That no lond loueth the · and ȝut leest thyn owene.

For Mede hath knyht clerkes · and couetyse to-geders,

That al the wit of this worlde · ys woxen in-to gyle. 212

Thus this lady ledeth thy londe · now lord ȝeue hure sorwe!

For pore men der nat pleyne · ne here pleinte shewe,

Suche a maister ys Mede · a-mong men of goode.'

Thanne mornede Mede · menyng hure to the kynge, 216

To haue space to speke · spede yf hue myghte.

The kyng graunted hure grace · with a good wyll;

'Excuse the yf thow canst · ich can no more seggen;

For Conscience acuseth the · to congie the for euere.' 220

'Nay, lord,' quath that lady · 'leyueth hym the werse,

When ȝe wyten witerliche · in wham the wrong lyggeth.

Ther that myschief ys gret · Mede may helpen.

And that knoweth Conscience · ich cam noȝt to chiden, 224

see l. 202. 212. whit P. 213. þy EG; þi IFMS; þys P. 218. wit P.
219. P om. the. 222. Wen P. wam P. 223. þat IMSEG; þe P.

Ne to deprae thi persone · with a proud herte. 172

Wel thou wost, Concience · (but ȝif thou wolt lyȝe),
Thow hast honged on my nekke · enleue tymes;
And eke i-gripen of my gold · and ȝiuen ther the lykede.
Whi thou wraththest the now · wonder me thinketh! 176

Ne deprae thi persone · with a proude herte.

Wel thow wost, wernard · but ȝif thow wolt gabbe,
Thow hast hanged on myne half · elleuene tymes, 180

And also griped my golde · gyue it where the liked;
And whi thow wrattthest the now · wonder me thynketh.
ȝit I may as I myȝte · menske the with ȝiftes,
And mayntene thi manhode · more than thow knoweste. 184

Ac thow hast famed me foule · bifer the kynge here.
For kulled I neuere no kynge · ne conseilled ther-after,
Ne dede as thow demest · I do it on the kynge!

B. 187. it WRO; LC *om.* C. 225. ȝi FME; ȝe P. 228. an (*for*
and) P. were P. 229. P *om.* the. 235. wer P. 236. P *om.* so.
240. felde IE; feld P. 241. houre P. 243. ys (*for* hys) P; and in
l. 251. 250. Wer P. 257. ycoronede P.

For ȝit I may as I mihte · menske the with ȝiftes,
 And meyntene thi monhede · more then thou knowest,
 And thou hast famed me foule · bifore the kyng heere.

For culde I neuere no kyng · ne counseilede ther-after; 180
 Ne dude I neuere as thou dust · I do hit on the kyng!

Ne to depraue thi persone · with a prout herte.
 Wel thou wost wyterly · bote yf thou wolle gabbe,
 Thow hast hanged on myn hals · elleuen tymes,
 And al-so grypen of my gold · and gaf it where the lykede. 228
 Why thou wratthest the now · wonder me thynketh,
 ȝut ich may, as ich myghte · menske the with ȝyftes,
 And menteyny thy manhod · more than thou knowest.

Ac thou hast famede me foule · by-fore the kynge here; 232
 For culde ich neuere no kyng · ne consailed so to done;
 Ac ich saued my-self · and sexty thousand lyues,
 Bothe her and elles wher · in alle kynne londes.
 Ac thou thy-self sothliche · ho so it segge dorste, 236
 Hast arwed meny hardy men · that hadden wil to fyghte,
 To brennen and to bruten · to bete a-doun strengthes.
 In the contreis ther the kyng cam · conscience hym lette,
 That he ne felde nat hus foes · tho fortune it wolde, 240
 And as hus werdes were ordeined · by wil of oure lorde.
 Caytiflyche thou, Conscience · consailedist the kyng leten
 In hus enemys honde · hys heritage of Fraunce.
 Vnconnyng ys that conscience · a kyngdome to sulle, 244
 That ys conquestyd thorw comune helpe; · a kyngdome other duche
 May nat be sold sothly · so meny here part asken
 Of folk that fauht ther-fore · and folwed the kynges wil.
 The lest lad that longeth to hym · be the lond wonnen, 248
 Loketh after lordshep · other othere large mede,
 Wher-by he may as a man · for euere-more lyue after.
 And that ys the kynde of a kyng · that conquereth of hys enemyes,
 To helpe heyeliche al hus host · othere elles to graunte 252
 Al that hus men mowen wyne · to do ther-mydd here beste.
 For-thy ich counsaile no kyng · eny counsaile aske
 At Conscience, yf he coueyteth · to conquest a reome.
 For sholde neuere Conscience · be my constable, 256
 Were ich a kyng ycoroned · by Marye, quath Mede,
 'Ne be mareschal of my men · ther ich moste fyghte.

In Normandie nas he not · a-nuyzed for my sake;
 Ac thou thi-self sothliche · schomedest him there,
 Creptest in-to a caban · for colde of thi nayles, 184
 Wendest that wynter · wolde haue last euere,
 And dreddest to haue ben ded · for a dim cloude,
 And hastedest hamward · for hunger of thi wombe!
 Withouten pite, pilour! · pore men thou robbedest, 188
 And beere heor bras on thi bac · to Caleys to sulle.
 Ther I lafte with my lord · his lyf forto saue,
 Maade him murthe ful muche · mournynge to lete,
 Battede hem on the bakkes · to bolden heore hertes, 192
 Dude hem hoppe for hope · to haue me at wille.
 Hedde I be marchal of his men · (bi Marie of heuene)!

In Normandye was he nouzte · noyed for my sake; 188
 Ac thow thi-self sothely · shamedest hym ofte,
 Crope in-to a kaban · for colde of thi nailles,
 Wendest that wyntre · wolde haue lasted euere,
 And draddest to be ded · for a dym cloude, 192
 And hiedest homeward · for hunger of thi wombe.
 With-out pite, piloure · pore men thow robbedest,
 And bere here bras at thi bakke · to Caleys to selle.
 There I lafte with my lorde · his lyf for to saue, 196
 I made his men meri · and mornynge lette.
 I bateded hem on the bakke · and bolded here hertis,
 And dede hem hoppe for hope · to haue me at wille.
 Had I ben marschal of his men · (bi Marie of heuene)! 200
 I durst haue leyde my lyf · and no lasse wedde,
 He shulde haue be lorde of that londe · a lengthe and a brede,
 And also kyng of that kitthe · his kynne for to helpe,
 The leste brolle of his blode · a barounes pere! 204

Cowardliche thow, Conscience · conseiledest hym thennes,
 To leuen his lordeship · for a litel siluer,
 That is the richest rewme · that reyne ouer houeth!
 It bicometh to a kyng · that kepeth a rewme, 208
 To giue mede to men · that mekelich hym serueth,
 To alienes and to alle men · to honoure hem with giftes;
 Mede maketh hym biloued · and for a man holden.
 Emperoures and erlis · and al manere lordes 212
 For giftes han yonge men · to renne and to ride.

I durste haue i-leid my lyf · and no lasse wed,
 He hedde beo lord of that lond · in lenkthe and in brede; 196
 And eke kyng of that cuththe · his cun for to helpe;
 The leeste barn of his blod · a barouns pere.

Sothliche, thou Conciene · thou counseildest him thennes,
 To leue that lordschupe · for a luitel seluer, 200
 That is the riccheeste reame · that reyn ouer houeth!

Hit bicometh for a kyng · that kepeth a reame
 To 3iue meede to men · that mekeliche him seruen;
 To aliens, to alle men · to honoure hem with 3iftes. 204
 Meede maketh him beo bilouet · and for a mon i-holden.
 Emperours and eorles · and alle maner lordes
 Thorw 3iftes han 3onge men · to renne and to ride.

Ac hadde ich, Mede, be hus mareschal · ouer hus men in Fraunce,
 Ich dorst haue leid my lyue · and no lasse wedde, 260
 He had be lord of that londe · in lengthe and in brede,
 And al-so kyng of that cuth · hus kyn to haue holpen,
 The leste brol of hus blod · a barones pere.

Vnkyndely thow, Conscience · consailedest hym thennes, 264
 To lete so hus lordshup · for a lytel moneye.

Hyt by-cometh for a kyng · that shal kepe a reame,
 To 3eue men mede · that meklyche hym serueth,
 To alienes, to alle men · to honoury hem with 3yftes; 268
 Mede maketh hym be by-loued · and for a man yholde.
 Emperours and erles · and alle manere lordes
 Thoruh 3iftes hauen 3emen · to rennen and to ryde.

C. 260. leid MFS; led P. 263. brol F; brolle I; brel P. 267.
 mecklyche P. 268. 3eftes P; see l. 162. 269. be IEFS; P om. yholde
 ES; yolde P. 271. 3emen EFS; 3emmen P.

The pope and his prelates · presentes vnderfongen, 208
 And meedeth men hem-seluen · to meyntene heore lawes.
 Seruauns for heore seruise · (3e seon wel the sothe),
 Taketh meede of heore maystres · as thei mowen a-corde.
 Beggars for heore biddying · biddeth men meede; 212
 Munstrals for heor murthe · meede thei asken.
 The kyng meedeth his men · to maken pees in londe;
 Men that knoweth clerkes · meede hem craueth.
 Prestes that precheth · the peple to goode 216
 Asketh meede and masse-pons · and heore mete eke.

The pope and alle prelatis · presentz vnderfongen,
 And medeth men hem-seluen · to meyntene here lawes.
 Seruauntz for her seruise · we seth wel the sothe, 216
 Taken mede of here maistre · as thei mowe acorde.
 Beggeres for here biddynge · bidden men mede;
 Mynstralles for here murthe · mede thei aske.
 The kyng hath mede of his men · to make pees in londe;
 Men that teche chyl dren · craue of hem mede. 221
 Prestis that precheth the poeple · to gode, asken mede,
 And masse-pans and here mete · at the mele-tymes.
 Alkynnes crafty men · crauen mede for here prentis; 224
 Marchauntz and mede · mote nede go togideres;
 No wizte as I wene · with-oute mede may libbe.'

Quod the kyng to Conscience · 'bi Criste! as me thynketh,
 Mede is well worthi · the maistrye to haue!' 228

'Nay,' quod Conscience to the kyng · and kneled to the erthe,
 'There aren two manere of medes · my lorde, with 3owre leue.
 That one, god of his grace · graunteth in his blisse
 To tho that wel worchen · whil thei ben here. 232

The prophete precheth ther-of · and put it in the sautere,
Domine quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo?

A. 212. mede THD; mete V. 219. nede THUD; not V. B. 227.
 Quod WCRO; Quat; L. C. 283. hue P. 285. Cryest P. 287.
 P om. to 3e kyng. 290. lyuen ISG; P om. 292. and IF; a PES.
 298. whiterly P. wer P.

Alle kunne craftes men · craueth meede for heore prentys;
Meede and marchaundie · mot nede go to-gedere.

Ther may no wiht, as I wene · with-uten meede libbe.' 220

'Now,' quod the kyng to Conciencie · 'be Crist, as me thinketh,
Meede is worthi · muche maystrie to haue!'

'Nay,' quod Conciencie to the kyng · and knelede to grounde;
'Ther beoth twey maner of meedes · my lord, bi thi leue. 224

That on, good god of his grace · 3iueth, in his blisse,
To hem that wel worchen · whil that thei ben here.

The prophete hit prechede · and put hit in the psauter,
Qui pecuniam suam non dedit ad usuram, &c.

The pope and alle prelates · presentes vnder-fongen, 272

And 3euen mede to men · to menteynye here lawes.

Seriauntes for here seruice · mede they asken,

And taken mede of here maistres · as thei mow a-corde.

Beggars and bedmen · crauen mede for here prayers. 276

Mynstrals for here mynstralcy · a mede thei asken.

Maistres that techen clerkes · crauen hure for mede.

Prestes that prechen · and the puple techen

Asken mede and masse-pans · and here mete bothe. 280

Alle kyne crafty men · crauen mede for here aprentys,

Marchaundise and mede · mote nedes go to-gederes.

Is no lede that leueth · that he ne loueth mede,

And glad for to grype hure · gret lord other poure.' 284

Tho quath the kyng to Conscience · 'by Cryst, at my knowynge,
Mede ys worthy, me thynketh · the maistrye to haue.'

'Nay,' quath Conscience to the kyng · 'clerkes wyten the sothe,
That Mede ys euermore · a meyntenour of gyle, 288

As the sauter sheweth · by suche as 3euen mede,

That vnlawfulliche lyuen · hauen large honden,

To 3eue mede to men · more other lasse.

Ac ther ys mede and mercede · and bothe men demen 292

A desert for som doynge · derne other elles.

Mede meny tymes · men 3euen by-for the doynge;

And that ys nother reson ne ryht · ne no reame lawe

That eny man mede toke · bote he it myghte deserue, 296

And for to vndertake · to trauely for another,

And wot neuere witterly · wher he lyue so longe,

Ne haue hap to hus hele · mede to deseruen.

Tak no meede, mi lord · of men that beoth trewe; 228
 Loue hem, and leeue hem · for vr lordes loue of heuene;
 Godes meede and his merci · ther-with thou maiht winne.

Bote ther is a meede mesureles · that maystrie desyreth,
 To meyntene misdoers · meede thei taken; 232
 And therof seith the psauter · in the psalmes ende,

*In quorum manibus iniquitates sunt; dextera eorum repleta
 est muneribus;*

That here rizthond is hepid · ful of ȝeftis,
 And heo that gripeth heore ȝiftus · (so me God helpe!)

“Lorde, who shal wonye in thi wones · and with thine holi seyntes,
 Or resten on thi holy hilles?” · this asketh Dauid;

And Daud assoileth it hym-self · as the sauter telleth, 236

Qui ingreditur sine macula, et operatur iusticiam,

Tho that entren of o colour · and of on wille,
 And han wrouȝte werkis · with rizte and with reson;
 And he that ne vseth nauȝte · the lyf of vsurye,
 And enfourmeth pore men · and pursueth treuthe; 240

*Qui pecuniam suam non dedit ad usuram, et munera super
 innocentem, &c.*

And alle that helpeth the innocent · and halt with the riztful,
 With-oute mede doth hem gode · and the trewthe helpeth—
 Suche manere men, my lorde · shal haue this furst mede
 Of god at a grete nede · whan thei gone hennes. 244

There is an-other mede mesurelees · that maistres desireth;
 To meyntene mysdoers · mede thei take;
 And there-of seith the sauter · in a salmes ende,

*In quorum manibus iniquitates sunt, dextera eorum repleta
 est muneribus;*

And he that gripeth her golde · so me god helpe! 248
 Shal abie it bittere · or the boke lyeth!

Prestes and persones · that plesynge desireth,
 That taketh mede and mone · for messes that thei syngeth,
 Taketh here mede here · as Mathew vs techeth; 252

Amen, amen, receperunt mercedem suam.

That laboreres and lowe folke · taketh of her maistres,
 It is no manere mede · but a mesurable hire.

In marchandise is no mede · I may it wel a-vowe;
 It is a permutacioun apertly · a penyworth for an othre. 256

Thei schullen a-bugge bitterly · or the bok lyzeth! 236

Preostes and persones · that plesyng desyreth,
And taketh meede and moneye · for massen that thei syngen,
Schullen han meede in this molde · that Matheu hath i-grauntet;
Amen dico vobis, receperunt mercedem suam.

That laborers and lough folk · taken of heore maystres, 240
Nis no maner meede · bote mesurable huyre.

In marchaundise nis no meede · I may hit wel avoue;
Hit is a permutacion · a peni for another.

Ich halde hym ouer-hardy · other elles nouht trewe, 300

That *pre manibus* ys payed · other elles paye asketh.

Harlotes and hores · and al-so fals leches,

Thei asken hure huyre · er they hit haue deserued.

And gylours gyuen by-fore · and goode men at the ende, 304

When the dede ys ydo · and the day y-endyd.

And that ys no mede · bote a mercede,

A maner dewe dette · for the doynge;

And bote if yt be payed prestliche · the payer is to blame, 308

As by the bok, that bit · no body to with-holde

The hure of hus hewe · ouer eue til a morwe:

Non morabitur opus mercenarij tui apud te usque mane.

And ther is reson as a reue · rewarding treuthe,

And bothe the lord and the laborer · ben leelliche yserued. 312

The mede that meny prestes taketh · for masses that thei syngen,

Amen, amen, Matheu seyth · mercedem suam recipiunt.

In marchaundise ys no mede · ich may it wel avowe;

Hit is a permutacion a-pertelich · o pene-worth for another. 316

A. 231. desyret V. 233. eende V. 234. This line is in H only.
B. 252. *receperunt* O; *recipiebant* LWCR. C. 300. ouere P. 303.
deseruede P. 307. dewe M; due S; diwe P. 309. wit-holde P.
310. hewe I; hywe P; hyne EFMS. 310. P om. *tui*. 313. prestes
ME; prest P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

[*Not in B-text.*]

C. 318. P om. or.	319. P om. and; see l. 320.	lege P; see l. 320.
322. þer-whit P.	323. P om. more.	326. erthe EIMFS; þe erthe P.
330. lyue SEI; leue P.	334. ceft P.	335. and IFG; a PEMS.
As MS; Ac PEIF.	341. þeste P.	342. P om. nobis.
347. fyndyng IMFSG; a fyndyng PE.	350. P om. a.	344. Wat P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

And thauh the kyng of hys cortesyne · kaiser, other pope,
 ȝeue lond other lordshup · or other large ȝiftes,
 To here leele and lyge · loue ys the cause.
 And yf the leelle and the lyge · be luther men after, 320
 Bothe kyng and kayser · and the coroned pope
 May desauowe that they dude · and douwe ther-with other,
 And a-non by-nymen hym hit · and neuere more after
 Nother thei ne here ayres · hardy to cleyne, 324
 That kyng other cayser hym gaf · catel other rente.
 For god gaf to Salamon · grace vp-on erthe,
 Rychesse and reson · whyle he ryht lyuede,
 And as sone as god seih · he suwed nouht hus wille, 328
 He reuede hym of hys richesse · and of hus ryht mynde,
 And soffrede hym lyue in mysbyleue · ich leyue he be in helle;
 So that god geueth no thyng · that synne ne ys the glose.
 And so ryght sothliche · may kyng and pope 332
 Bothe gyue and grauntye · ther hus grace liketh,
 And eft haue hit a-ȝeyn · of hem that don ille.

Thus ys mede and mercede · as two manere relacions,
 Rect and indyrect · rennyng bothe 336
 On a sad and a syker · semblable to hym-selue—
 As adiectif and substantyf · vnite asken,
 Acordaunce in kynde · in cas and in nombre,
 And ayther ys otheres help—· of hem cometh retribucion, 340
 That ys the ȝifte that god ȝyueth · to alle leelle lyuyng,
 Grace of good ende · and gret ioye after;

Retribuere dignare, domine deus, omnibus nobis, et cetera.

Quath the kyng to Conscience · ‘knownen ich wolde
 What is relacion rect · and indyrect after, 344
 And thanne adiectyf and substantif · for Englisch was it neuere.’

‘Relacion rect,’ quath Conscience · ‘ys a recorde of treuthe,

Quia antelate rei est recordatium,

Folwyng and fyndyng out · the foundement of strenthe,
 And styuelyche stonde forth · to strengthe of the foundement, 348
 In kynde and in case · and in cours of noumbre;
 As a leel laborer · that by-leuyth with hus maistre
 In hus paye and in hys pyte · and in hus pure treuthe,
 To paye hym yf he performeth · and haue pyte yf he faylleth, 352

[*Not in A-text.*]

[*Not in B-text.*]

C. 355. sustentif P.	356. P om. god.	357. triwe P.	358. in ys
kynde P.	359. churche P.	361. sennes P.	clansede P. 364.
whit is P.	366. kyne P.	367. case MF; cause PEISG.	to MFG;
two PES.	368. wich P.	369. noyt E; nout M; nat FSG; not I;	
noþer P.	370. for is P.	371. wo P.	worliche P. 374. kyne P.
375. kynde P.	376. <i>This line is in F only.</i>	378. is P.	380. him
MFS; hem P.			

[*Not in A-text.*]

And take hym for hus trauaile · al that treuthe wolde.
 So of hol herte cometh hope · and hardy relacion
 Seketh and suweth · hus substantif sauacion,
 That ys god, the grounde of al · a graciouse antecedent. 356
 And man ys relatif rect · yf he be ryht trewe;
 He a-cordeth with Crist in kynde · *uerbum caro factum est*;
 In case, *credere in ecclesia* · in holy kirke to byleyue;
 In numbere, rotie and aryse · and remyssion to haue, 360
 Of oure sory synnes · asoiled and clansed,
 And lyue, as oure crede ous kenneth · with Crist withouten ende.
 Thus is relacion rect · ryht as adiectif and substantif
 A-cordeth in alle kyndes · with his antecedent. 364
 Indirect thyng ys · as ho so coueited
 Alle kynne kynde · to knowe and to folwe,
 With-oute case to cacche to · and come to bothe numbres;
 In which beth good and nat good · and graunte here nothers wil.
 That is nozt reisonable ne rect · to refusy my syres sornome,
 Sitth y, his sone and seruaunt · suwe for his ryghte. 370
 For who so wol haue to wyue · my worldliche daughter,
 Ich wol fefte hym with hure fayre · and with hure foule taylende.
 So indirect thyng ys · inliche to coueyte 373
 To a-corde in alle kyndes · and in alle kynne numbere,
 With-oute cost and care · in alle kynne trauaile,
 With-oute resoun to rewarde · nauzt recching of the peple. 376
 Ac relacion rect · is a ryhtful custome,
 As, a kyng to cleyne · the comune at his wille
 To folwe hym, to fynde hym · and fecche at hem hus consail,
 That here loue thus to him · thorw al the londe a-corde. 380
 So comune cleymeth of a kyng · thre kynne thynges,
 Lawe, loue, and leaute · and hym lord antecedent,
 Bothe here hefd and here kyng · haldyng with no partie,
 Bote stande as a stake · that styketh in a muyre 384
 By-twyne two londes · for a trewe marke.
 Ac the moste partie of the puple · pure indirect semeth,
 For thei wilnen and wolde · as best were for hem-selue,
 Thauh the kyng and the comune · al the cost hadde. 388
 Al reson reproueth · such imparfit puple,
 And halt hem vnstedfast · for hem lacketh case.

But raddest thou neuer *Regum* · thou recreizede meede,
 Whi that veniaunce fel · on Saul and his children? 245
 God sende to seie · bi Samuels mouthe,

Ac reddestow neuere *Regum* · thow recrayed Mede,
 Whi the veniaunce fel · on Saul and on his children?
 God sent to Saul · bi Samuel the prophete,
 That Agage of Amaleke · and al his peple afre 260
 Shulde deye for a dede · that done had here eldres.

A. 244. thou TUD; that VH.
 peccunie P. 399. no (*for* to) P.
 403. sike EIG; asky P. fore P.

C. 391. As EIFS; Ac P. 393.
 401. churche P. 402. wen P.
 arde P. 408. askyng IMSG; and

That Agag and Amalec · and al his peple aftur,
Schulden dye for a dede . that don hedde his eldren
Azeynes Israel and Aaron · and Moyses his brother. 249

As relatifs indirect · reccheth thei neuere
Of the cours of the case · so they cacche suluer, 392
Be the pecunie y-paid · thauh parties chide.
He that mede may lacche · maketh litel tale,
Nyme he a nombre · of nobles other of shullenges ;
How that clyentes a-corde · mede a-counteth lytel. 396
Ac adiectif and substantif · ys as ich er tolde,
That ys, vnyte, acordaunce · in case, gendre, and nombre ;
And ys to mene in oure mouth · more ne mynne,
Bote that alle manere men · wommen, and children, 400
Sholde conformye to on kynde · on holy kirke to by-leyue,
And coueite the case · when thei couthe vnderstonde,
To sike for hure synnes · and suffre harde penaunce,
For that ilke lordes loue · that for oure loue deyde, 404
And coueited oure kynde · and be cald in oure name,

Deus homo,

And nymen hym into oure nombre · now and euere more ;

Qui in caritate manet in deo manet, et deus in eo.

Thus is man and mankynde · in manere of a substantif,
As *hic et hec homo* · askyng an adiectif 408
Of thre trewe termysens · *trinitas unus deus* ;

Nominativo, pater et filius et spiritus sanctus.

Ac ho so rat of *Regum* · rede me may of mede,
Hou hue Absolon · to hongynge brouhte ;
And sitthe, for Saul · sauede a kyng for mede 412
A-geyn godes comaundement · god toke suche veniaunce,
That Saul for that synne · and hus sone deyde,
And gaf the kyngdome to hus knaue · that kept sheep and lambren :
As men rat in *Regum* · after Ruth, of kynges, 416
Hou god sente to Saul · by Samuel the prophete,
That Agag of Amalek · and al hus lyge puple
Sholde deye delfulliche · for dedes of here eldren.

Samuel seide to Saul · God sendeth the and hoteth
 To beo boxum and boun · his biddynge to worche;
 'Wend thider with thin host · wymmen to culle, 253
 Children and cheorles · chop hem to dethe,
 Loke thow culle the kyng · coueyte not his goodes
 For milions of moneye; · morthur hem vchone.
 Bernes and beestes · brenne hem al to askes.' 256

And for he culde not the kyng · as Crist him-self hihte,
 Coueytede feir catel · and culde not his beestes,

'For-thi,' seid Samuel to Saul · 'god hym-self hoteth
 The, be boxome at his biddynge · his wille to fulfille:
 Wende to Amalec with thyn oste · and what thow fyndest there,
 slee it; 264

Biernes and bestes · brenne hem to ded;
 Wydwes and wyues · wommen and children,
 Moebles and vnmoebles · and al that thow myzte fynde,
 Brenne it, bere it nouzte away · be it neuere so riche, 268
 For mede ne for mone; · loke thow destruye it,
 Spille it and spare it nouzte · thow shalt spede the bettere.'

And for he coueyted her catel · and the kynge spared,
 Forbare hym and his bestes bothe · as the bible witnesseth, 272
 Otherwyse than he was · warned of the prophete,
 God seide to Samuel · that Saul shulde deye,
 And al his sede for that synne · shenfullich ende.
 Such a myschief mede made · Saul the kynge to haue, 276
 That god hated hym for euere · and alle his eyres after.
 The *culorum* of this cas · kepe I nouzte to shewe;
 An auenture it noyed men · none ende wil I make.
 For so is this worlde went · with hem that han powere, 280
 That who-so seyth hem sothes · is soonest yblamed.

I Conscience knowe this · for kynde witt me it tauzte,
 That resoun shal regne · and rewmes gouerne;
 And rizte as Agag hadde · happe shul somme. 284
 Samuel shal sleen hym · and Saul shal be blamed,
 And Daudid shal be diademed · and daunten hem alle,

A. 250. seendeth V. 252. Weend V. 258. *Read* culde; kilde TUD;
 slouh V; slow H. 260. Saul THUD; Samuel V. 264. clause TH;
 VHU om. 265. *Read* nuyzed; noizide T; noiede U; noyed D; *miswritten*

Bote brouhte with him the beestes · as the bible telleth,
 God sende to seye · that Saul schulde dye, 260
 And al his seed for that sunne · schendfulliche ende.
 Such a mischef meede · made the kyng to haue,
 That god hatede him euere · and his heires after.
 The *culorum* of this clause · kepe I not to schewe, 264
 In auenture hit nuyzed me · an ende wol I make :
 And riht as Agag hedde · hapne schulle summe ;
 Samuel schal slen him · and Saul schal be blamed,
 Daudid schal ben dyademed · and daunten hem alle, 268

‘Saul,’ quath Samuel · ‘god hym-self hoteth 420
 To be boxome at my bidding · hus bone to fulfyllen.
 Haste the with al thyn ost · to the lond of Amalek,
 And al that lyueth in that londe · oure lord wol that thou slee hit,
 Man, woman, and wif · child, widowe , and bestes ; 424
 Mebles and vnmebles · man and alle thynges,
 Bren hit, ber nouht away · be hit neuere so riche,
 For eny mede of moneye · al that thou myght spille ;
 Spar hit nat and thou · shalt spede the betere.’ 428
 And for he coueited hyre catel · and the kyng spared,
 For-bar hym and hus beste bestes · as the byble witnesseth,
 Otherwise than god wolde · by warnyng of the prophete,
 God seide to Samuel · that Saul sholde deye, 432
 And al hus for that synne · and shendfulliche ende.
 Thus was kyng Saul ouercome · for couetyse of mede,
 That god hatid hym for euere · and alle hus ayres after.
 The *culorum* of this cas · kepe ich nat to shewe, 436
 An aunter hit nuyede me · non ende wol ich make.
 For so ys the worlde went · with hem that han the power,
 That he that seith most sothest · sonnest ys y-blamed.
 Ich Conscience knowe this · for kynde witt me tauhte, 440
 That reson shal regne · and reames gouerne,
 And ryht as Agag hadde · happen shulleth somme.
 Samuel shal sle hym · and Saul shal be blamed,
 And Daudid shal be diademyd · and daunten alle oure enemyes, 444

And on Cristene kyng · kepen vs vchone.

Concience knoweth this; · for kuynde wit me tauzte

That resun schal regne · and reames gouerne;

Schal no more Meede · be mayster vppon eorthe, 272

Bote loue and lounnesse · and leute to-gedere.

And heo that trespasseth to trouthe · or doth azeyn his wille,
Leute schal don him lawe · or leosen his lyf elles.

And one Cristene kynge · kepen hem alle.

Shal na more Mede · be maistre, as she is nouthe, 288

Ac loue and lowenese · and lewte togederes,

Thise shul be maistres on molde · treuthe to saue.

And who-so trespasseth ayein treuthe · or taketh azein his wille,
Leute shal don hym lawe · and no lyf elles. 292

Shal no seriaunt for here seruyse · were a silke howue,

Ne no pelure in his cloke · for pledyng atte barre.

Mede of mys-doeres · maketh many lordes,

And ouer lordes lawes · reuleth the rewmes. 296

Ac kynde loue shal come ȝit · and conscience togideres,

And make of lawe a laborere · suche loue shal arise,

And such a pees amonge the peple · and a perfit trewthe,

That Iewes shal wene in here witte · and waxen wonder glade,

That Moises or Messie · be come in-to this erthe, 301

And haue wonder in here hertis · that men beth so trewe.

Alle that bereth baslarde · brode swerde or launce,

Axe other hachet · or eny wepne ellis, 304

Shal be demed to the deth · but if he do it smythyne

In-to sikul or to sithe · to schare or to kulter;

Conflabunt gladios suos in vomeres, &c.;

Eche man to pleye with a plow · pykoys or spade,

Spynne, or sprede donge · or spille hym-self with sleuthe. 308

Prestes and persones · with *placebo* to hunte,

And dyngen vpon Dauid · eche a day til eue.

Huntynge or haukyng · if any of hem vse,

His boste of his benefys · worth bynome hym after. 312

Shal neither kynge ne knyȝte · constable ne meire

Ouer-lede the comune · ne to the courte sompne,

Ne put hem in panel · to don hem plizte here treuthe,

But after the dede that is don · one dome shal rewarde, 316

Schal no seriant for that seruise · were a selk houue, 276
 Ne no ray robe · with riche pelure.

Meede of misdoers · maketh men so riche,
 That lawe is lord i-waxen · and leute is pore.
 Vnkuyndenesse is comaundour · and kuyndenesse is banescht.
 Ac kuynde wit schal come ȝit . and concience to-gedere, 281
 And make of lawe a laborer · such loue schal aryse !'

And on Cristene kyng · kepen ows echone.
 Schal no Mede be maister · neuere more after,
 Ac loue and lounnesse · and leaute to-gederes
 Shullen be maistres on molde · trewe men to helpe ; 448
 And ho so taketh aȝen treuthe · other transuerseth aȝens reson,
 Leaute shal do hym lawe · and no lif elles.

Schal no seriaunte for that seruyse · were a selk houue,
 Ne pelour in hus paueylon · for pledyng at the barre. 452
 Muchel yuel is thorw mede · meny tyme suffred,
 And letteth the lawe · thorw here large ȝyftes.

Ac kynde loue shal come ȝut · and conscience to-gederes,
 And make of lawe a laborer · suche loue shal aryse, 456
 And such pees among the puple · and a parfyt treuthe,
 That lewes shal wene in here witt · and wexe so glade,
 That here kyng be ycome · fro the court of heuene,
 Moyses other Messias · that men be so trewe. 460

For alle that bereth baselardes · bryght swerde, other launce,
 Axe, other acchett · other eny kynne wepne,
 Schal be demed to the deth · bote yf he do hit smythie
 In-to sykkel other into sithe · to shar other to culter ; 464

Conflabunt gladios suos in uomeres, et lanceas suas in falces ;

Ech man to pleye with a plouh · a pycoyse other a spade,
 Spynnen, and spek of god · and spille no tyme :
 Prestes and persons · *placebo* and *dirige*, 467

Here sauter and here seuene psalmis · for alle synful preyen.
 Haukyng other hontyng · yf eny of hem hit vsie,
 Schal lese ther-fore hus lyue-lode · and hus lif paraenture.
 Schal nother kyng ne knyȝt · constable ne meyre
 Ouer-cark the comune · ne to the court sompne, 472
 Ne putte men in panell · ne do men plight here treuthe ;
 Bote after the dede that ys ydo · the dome shal recorde,

[*Not in A-text.*]

Mercy or no mercy · as treuthe wil acorde.

Kynges courte and comune courte · consistorie and chapitele,
Al shal be but one courte · and one baroun be iustice ;
Thanne worth Trewe-tonge, a tidy man · that tened me neuere.
Batailles shal non be · ne no man bere wepne, 321

And what smyth that ony smytheth · be smyte therwith to dethe,

Non leuabit gens contra gentem gladium, &c.

And er this fortune falle · fynde men shal the worste,
By syx sonnes and a schippe · and half a shef of arwes ; 324
And the myddel of a mone · shal make the Iewes to torne,
And saracenes for that sizte · shulle synge *gloria in excelsis*, &c.,
For Makomet and Mede · myshappe shal that tyme ;

For, *melius est bonum nomen quam diuicie multe.*

Also wroth as the wynde · wex Mede in a while, 328
'I can no Latyn,' quod she · 'clerkis wote the sothe.
Se what Salamon seith · in Sapience bokes,

That hij that 3iueth 3iftes · the victorie wynneth,
And moche worschip had ther-with · as holiwryt telleth, 332

Honorem adquiret qui dat munera, &c.

'I leue wel, lady,' quod Conscience · 'that thi Latyne be trewe ;
Ac thow art like a lady · that redde a lessoun ones,
Was, *omnia probate* · and that plesed here herte,
For that lyne was no lenger · atte leues ende. 336

Had she loked that other half · and the lef torned,
She shulde haue founden fele wordis · folwyng thereafter,
Quod bonum est tenele · treuthe that texte made !

And so ferde 3e, madame ! · 3e couthe namore fynde, 340
Tho 3e loked on Sapience · sittynge in 3oure studie.

This tixte that 3e han tolde · were gode for lordes,
Ac 3ow failed a cunnyng clerke · that couthe the lef haue torned !
And if 3e seche Sapience eft · fynde shal 3e that folweth, 344
A ful teneful tixte · to hem that taketh mede,

And that is, *animam autem auferit* · *accipientium*, &c. :

And that is the taille of the tixte · of that that 3e schewed,
That theize we wyne worschip · and with mede haue victorie, 348
The soule that the sonde taketh · bi so moche is bounde.'

B. 322. smytheth WO ; smithie R ; smyteth LC. 337, 338. she WC ;
sche RO ; 3e L. C. 478. tydy ISG ; trewe P. tenele EG ; tened IFM ;

[*Not in A-text.*]

Mercy other no mercy · as most trewe a-corden.

Kynges court and comune court · constorie and chapitre, 476
Al shal be bote on court · and on berne be Iustice;

That worth Trewe-tunge, a tydy man · that tenede me neuere.

Batailles shulle neuere eft be · ne man bere eg-tool,

And yf eny man smythie hit · be smyte ther-with to dethe; 480

*Non leuabit gens contra gentem gladium, nec excercebuntur
ultra ad prelium.*

Ac er this fortune by-falle · fynde me shal the worste,

By syx sonnes and a ship · and half a shef of arwes.

And the myddell of a mone · shal makye the Iewes turne,

And sarasyns for that syght · shullen synge *credo in spiritum
sanctum.* 484

For Makamed and Mede · shullen myshappen that tyme,

For *melius est bonum nomen quam diuicie multe.*

As wroth as the wynd · wex Mede ther-after—

‘Lo what Salamon seith,’ quath hue · ‘in Sapience the byble,

“That ȝeueth ȝyftes, take ȝeme · the victorie he wynneth, 488

And moche worshep ther-with” · as holy writt telleth :

Honorem acquirit qui dat munera.

‘Ich leue the, lady,’ quath Conscience · ‘for that Latyn is trewe :

Thow art lyke a lady · that a lesson radde,

Was, *omnia probate* · that plesed hure herte; 492

That leef was no lengere · and at the leues ende.

Ac hadde hue loked on the list half · and the leef turned,

Hue sholde haue yfounde folwyng · fele wordes after,

Quod bonum est tenete · a tyxte of treuthes makyng.

So he that secheth Sapience · fynde he shal that folweth

Tristilich a teneful tixt · to hem that taketh mede, 498

The whiche hatte, (as ich haue rad · and other that conne rede,)

Animam aufert accipientium :

“Worshup he wynneth · that wol ȝeue mede,

Ac he that receyueth other recetteth hure · ys recettor of gyle.”

Hic explicit passus quartus.

tenede P. 480. smyþen P; see l. 463. 482. shup P. 484. saresyns P.
486. waxe P. 490. leyue P. for—trewe IMFSG; as holy writt telleth P.
491. ert P. 492. þat IMFSG; wiche P. 493. leef IFSG; P om. 498.
teneful ISE; tuenful P. 500. hue (for he) P.

PASSUS IV.

Passus Quartus de Visione.

‘**S** ESETH,’ seide the kyng · ‘I suffre ȝou no more.
 ȝe schulle sauȝtene forsothe · and serue me bothe.
 Cusse hire,’ quath the kyng · ‘Concience, ich hote.’
 ‘Nay, be Crist,’ quod Concience · ‘congeye me rather! 4
 Bote Reson rede me ther-to · arst wol I dye!’

PASSUS IV.

Passus quartus de visione, ut supra.

‘**C** ESSETH,’ seith the kynge · ‘I suffre ȝow no lengere.
 ȝe shal sauȝtne for sothe · and serue me bothe.
 Kisse hir,’ quod the kynge · ‘Conscience, I hote.’
 ‘Nay, bi Criste,’ quod Conscience · ‘congeye me for euere! 4
 But Resoun rede me ther-to · rather wil I deye!’
 ‘And I comaunde the,’ quod the kynge · to Conscience thanne,
 ‘Rape the to ride · and Resoun thow fecche;
 Comaunde hym that he come · my conseil to here. 8
 For he shal reule my rewme · and rede me the beste,
 And acounte with the, Conscience · so me Cryst helpe,
 How thow lernest the peple · the lered and the lewede.’
 ‘I am fayne of that forward’ · seyde the freke thanne, 12
 And ritt rizte to Resoun · and rowneth in his ere,
 And seide as the kynge badde · and sithen toke his leue.
 ‘I shal arraye me to ride,’ quod Resoun · ‘reste the a while’—
 And called Catoun his knaue · curteise of speche, 16
 And also Tomme Trewe-tonge- · telle-me-no-tes-
 Ne-lesyng-to-lawȝe-of- · for-I-loued-hem-neuere—

‘And I comaunde the,’ quod the kyng · to Concience thenne,
 ‘That thou rape the to ride · and Reson thou fette;
 Comaunde him that he come · my counseil to here. 8
 For he schal reule my reame · and rede me the beste
 Of Meede; and of other mo · and what mon schal hir wedde;
 And a-counte with Concience · so me Crist helpe!
 How thou ledest my peple · lered and lewed.’ 12
 ‘I am fayn of that foreward’ · seide the freike thenne,
 And rod riht to Reson · and rouned in his ere,
 Seyde as the kyng sende · and seththe tok his leue.
 ‘I schal araye me to ride,’ quod Reson · ‘reste the a while’— 16
 And clepte Caton his knaue · curteis of speche—

PASSUS V.

Incipit passus quintus.

‘**C**ESSETH,’ saide the kyng · ‘ich soffre ȝow no lenger;
 ȝe shulleth sauhtne for sothe · and serue me bothe.
 Kus hure,’ quath the kyng · ‘Conscience, ich hote.’
 ‘Nay, by Crist,’ quath Conscience · ‘conge me rather! 4
 Bote Reson rede me ther-to · rather wol ich deye.’
 ‘And ich comaunde,’ quath the kynge · to Conscience thenne,
 ‘Rape the to ryde · and Reson that thow fecche;
 Comaunde hym that he come · my consail to hure, 8
 For he shal rulye my reame · and rede me the beste,
 Of Mede and of other mo · and what man shal hure wedde,
 And a-counte with the, Conscience · so me Crist helpe,
 How thow ledest my puple · lered and lewede.’ 12
 ‘Ich am fayn of that forwarde · in fayth,’ tho quath Conscience,
 And rod forth to Reson · and rouned in hus ere,
 And seide hym as the kyng saide · and sitthe tok hus leue.
 ‘Ich shal a-raye me to ryde,’ quath Reson · ‘rest thow a whyle’—
 And called Caton hus knaue · corteys of speche, 17
 And al-so Tomme Trewe-tonge · telle-me-no-tales-
 Ne-lesynges-to-lauben-of · for-ich-louede-hit-neuere—

'Sette my sadel vppon Soffre- · til-I-seo-my-tyme,
 And loke thou warroke him wel · with swithe feole gurthhes;
 Hong on him an heui bridel · to bere his hed lowe, 20
 3it wol he make moni a whi · er he come there.'

Thenne Conscience on his capul · carieth forth faste,
 And Resun with him rideth · rappyng swithe;
 Bote on a wayn Witty · and Wisdame i-feere 24

'And sette my sadel vppon Suffre- · til-I-se-my-tyme,
 And lete warrok it wel · with Witty-wordes gerthes, 20
 And hange on hym the heuy brydel · to holde his hed lowe,
 For he wil make wehe · tweye er he be there.'

Thanne Conscience vppon his caple · kaireth forth faste,
 And Resoun with hym rit · rownyng togideres, 24
 Whiche maistries Mede · maketh on this erthe.

One Waryn Wisdom · and Witty his fere
 Folwed hem faste · for thei haued to done
 In the cheker and at the chauncerie · to be discharged of thinges;
 And riden fast, for Resoun · shulde rede hem the beste, 29
 For to saue hem, for siluer · fro shame and fram harmes.

And Conscience knewe hem wel · thei loued coueitise,
 And bad Resoun ride faste · and recche of her noither, 32
 'There aren wiles in here wordes · and with Mede thei dwelleth;
 There as wratthe and wranglyng is · there wyne thei siluer,
 Ac there is loue and lewte · thei wil nouzte come there;

Contricio et infelicitas in vicijs eorum, &c.

Thei ne gyueth nouzte of god · one gose wynges, 36

Non est timor dei ante oculos eorum.

For, wot god, thei wolde do more · for a dozeine chickenes,
 Or as many capones · or for a seem of otes,
 Than for loue of owre lorde · or alle hise leue seyntes.

For-thi, Resoun, lete hem ride · tho riche, bi hem-seluen, 40
 For Conscience knoweth hem nouzte · ne Cryst, as I trowe.'
 And thanne Resoun rode faste · the riȝte heiȝe gate,
 As Conscience hym kenned · til thei come to the kynges.

Curteisliche the kynges thanne · come aȝein Resoun, 44
 And bitwene hym-self and his sone · sette hym on benche,

A. 24. witty TH; wyty U; wyd V. B. 24. rit RO; rydes C; ritte L.
 27. for thei WOB; L om. C. 21. warrok P. P om. the. 22. his

Folweden hem faste · for thei hedden to done
 In esscheker and chauncelrie · to ben desarget of thinges;
 And riden faste, for Reson · schulde reden hem the beste
 For to sauen hem-self · from schome and from harme. 28

Bote Conscience com arst · to court bi a myle,
 And romede forth bi Reson · riht to the kyng.
 Corteisliche the kyng · thenne com to Resoun,
 Bitwene himself and his sone · sette him on benche, 32

‘And sette my sadel vppon Soffre- · til-ich-see-my-tyme, 20
 Let warroke hym wel · with Avyse-the-by-fore,
 For it is the wone of Wil · to wynse and to kyke;
 Let peitrel hym and pole hym · with peyntede wittes.’

Thenne Conscience on hus capel · comsed to prykie, 24
 And Reson with hym ryzt · rounyng to-geders
 Which a maister Mede was · a-mong poure and riche.

Then Waryn Wysman · and Wyly-man his felawe
 Fayn were to folwen hem · and fast ryden after, 28
 To take red at Reson · that recorde sholde
 By-fore the kyng and Conscience · yf thei couthen pleyne
 On Wily-man and Wittiman · and Waryn Wrynge-lawe.
 Ac Conscience knew hem wel · and carped to Reson: 32
 ‘Here cometh,’ quath Conscience · ‘that couetyse seruen;
 Ryd forth, syre Reson · and recche nat of here tales,
 For ther wratthe and wranglyng ys · ther thei wolle a-byde;
 Ac ther loue and leaute ys · hit lyketh nat here hertes: 36

*Contricio et infelicitas in uiis eorum, et uiam pacis non
 cognouerunt; non est timor dei ante oculos eorum.*

Thei geueth nozt of good faith · god wot the sothe;
 Thei wolde don for a dyner · other for a dosene capones
 More than for oure lordes loue · other oure lady hus moder.’

Thanne Reson rod forth · and tok reward of no man, 40
 And dude as Conscience kenned · til he the kyng mette.

Corteslich the kyng then · cam and grette Reson,
 And by-twene hymself and his sone · sette tho syre Reson,

(for is) P. 26. Wich P. 27. wily IFSE; wyle P. 31. williman P.
 43. self IM; PEFS om. is P.

And wordeden a gret while · wysliche to-gedere.

Thene Pees com to parlement · and put vp a bille,
 Hou that Wrong aȝeyn his wille · his wyf hedde i-take,
 And hou he rauschede Rose · Reynaldes lemmon, 36
 And Mergrete of hire maydenhod · maugre hire chekes.
 'Bothe my gees and my grys · his gadelynges fetten;
 I dar not for dreede of hem · fihte ne chide.
 He borwede of me bayzard · and brouhte him neuer aȝeyn, 40
 Ne no ferthing him fore · for nouȝt that I con plede.
 He meynteneth his men · to morthere myn owne,

And wordeden wel wyseli · a gret while togideres.

And thanne come Pees in-to parlement · and put forth a bille,
 How Wronge aȝeines his wille · had his wyf taken, 48
 And how he rauissed Rose · Reginoldes loue,
 And Margarete of hir maydenhode · maugre here chekis.
 'Bothe my gees and my grys · his gadelynges feccheth;
 I dar nouȝte for fere of hym · fyȝte ne chyde. 52

He borwed of me bayard · he brouȝte hym home neure,
 Ne no ferthyng ther-fore · for nauȝte I couthe plede.
 He meyneteth his men · to morthere myne hewen,
 Forstalleth my feyres · and fiȝteth in my chepyng, 56
 And breketh vp my bernis dore · and bereth aweye my whete,
 And taketh me but a taile · for ten quarteres of otes,
 And ȝet he bet me ther-to · and lyth bi my mayde,
 I nam nouȝte hardy for hym · vneth to loke.' 60
 The kynge knewe he seide sothe · for Conscience hym tolde,
 That Wronge was a wikked lust · and wrouȝte moche sorwe.

Wronge was afered thanne · and Wisdome he souȝte 63
 To make pees with his pens · and profered hym manye,
 And seide, 'had I loue of my lorde thy kynge · litel wolde I recche,
 Theȝe Pees and his powere · pleyned hym cure!' 66

A. 36. hou THUD; V om. 38. his THUD; the V. C. 44. wile P.
 47. rauysede P. 49. gees IMEG; goos P. 52. wanne P. seluer MG;

Forstalleth my feire · fiheth in my chepynges,
 Breketh vp my berne-dore · and bereth awei my whete, 44
 And taketh me bote a tayle · of ten quarter oten;
 And 3it he bat me therto · and lizth be my mayden.
 I nam not so hardi for him · vp for to loke.'

The kyng kneuh he seide sooth · for Conscience him tolde. 48
 Wrong was a-fert tho · and Wisdam souhte
 To make his pees with pons · and proferde forth moneye,
 And seide, 'Hedde I loue of the kyng · luite wolde I recche
 Thauh Pees and his pouwer · playneden on me euere!' 52

And speken tho wise wordes · a long while to-gederes. 44

Thenne cam Pees in-to parlement · and putte vp a bylle,
 How that Wrong wilffullich · hadde hus wif for-leyen,
 And how he rauyschede Rose · the riche wydewe, by nyghte,
 And Margarete of here maidenhod · as he mette hure late. 48

'Bothe my gees and my grys · and my gras he taketh,
 Ich dar nouht for his felaweshepe · in faith,' Pees seide,
 'Bere sikerlich eny seluer · to seint Gyles doune;

He waiteth ful wel · whanne ich seluer take, 52
 What wey ich wende · wel 3erne he aspieth,
 To robbe me and to ryfle me · yf ich ryde softe.

3ut he is bold for to borwe · and baddelich he payeth;
 He borwede of me bayarde · and browte hym hom neuere, 56
 Ne no ferthyng ther-fore · for nouht ich couthe plede.

He menteyneth hus men · to morthre myn hewes,
 And for-stalleth myn faires · and fyghteth in my chepynges,
 And breketh vp my bernes dore · and bereth away my whete, 60

And taketh me bote a taile · for ten quarters other twelue.
 3ut he manasceth me and myne · and lyth by my mayde,
 Ich am nouht hardy for hym · vnnethe to loke.'

The kyng knew that he seide soth · for Conscience hym tolde,
 How Wronge was a wickede man · and moche wo wrouhte. 65

Tho was Wrong a-fered · Wysdome he by-souhte;
 On men of lawe Wrong lokede · and largelich hem profrede,
 And for to haue of here help · handy-dandy payede. 68

'Had ich loue of the lorde · litel wolde ich recche
 Of Pees and of hus power · thauh he pleynede euere!'

Wisdam wente tho · and so dude Wit,
 And for Wrong hedde i-do · so wikked a dede;
 And warnede Wrong tho · with such a wys tale;
 ‘Whose worcheth bi wil · wraththe maketh ofte; 56
 I sigge hit bi thi-seluen · thou schalt hit sone fynde.
 Bote ȝif Meede make hit · thi mischef is vppe,
 For bothe thi lyf and thi lond · lizth in the kynges grace.’
 Wrong thenne vppon Wisdom · wepte to helpe, 60
 Him for his handidandi · rediliche he payede.
 Thene Wisdam and Wit · wente to-gedere,
 And nomen Meede with hem · merci to wynne.
 Pees putte forth his hed · and his ponne blodi: 64
 ‘Withouten gult, god wot · gat I this scathe.’

Tho wan Wisdome · and sire Waryn the witty,
 For that Wronge had ywrouȝt · so wikked a dede, 68
 And warned Wronge tho · with such a wyse tale;
 ‘Who-so worcheth bi wille · wratthe maketh ofte;
 I seye it bi thi-self · thow shalt it wel fynde.
 But if Mede it make; thi myschief is vppe, 72
 For bothe thi lyf and thy londe · lyth in his grace.’
 Thanne wowed Wronge · Wisdome ful ȝerne,
 To make his pees with his pens · handi-dandi payed.
 Wisdome and Witte thanne · wenten togideres, 76
 And toke Mede myd hem · mercy to winne.
 Pees put forth his hed · and his panne bloody;
 ‘Wyth-uten gilte, god it wote · gat I this skathe,
 Conscience and the comune · knowen the sothe.’ 80

Ac Wisdom and Witt · were about faste
 To ouercome the kyng · with catel, ȝif thei myȝte.
 The kynge swore, by Crist · and by his crowne bothe,
 That Wronge for his werkis · sholde wo tholye, 84
 And comaunded a constable · to casten hym in yrens,
 ‘And late hym nouȝte this seuene ȝere · seen his feet ones.’
 ‘God wot,’ quod Wysdom · ‘that were nauȝte the beste;
 And he amendes mowe make · late meynprise hym haue; 88
 And be borwgh for his bale · and biggen hym bote,
 And so amende that is mysdo · and euermore the bettere.’
 Witt acorded ther-with · and seide the same:

Concience and the kyng · knewen the sothe;
Wusten wel that Wrong · was a schrewe euere.

But Wisdam and Wit · weoren ȝeorne aboute faste 68
To ouercome the kyng · with catel ȝif heo mihten.

The kyng swor tho bi Crist · and bi his coroune bothe,
That Wrong for his werkes · schulde wo thole,
And comaundede a constable · to casten him in irens; 72
'He ne schal this seuen ȝer · seon his feet ones.'

'God wot,' quath Wisdam · 'that weore not the beste;
And he amendes make · let meynprise him haue;
And beo borw of his bale · and buggen him bote, 76
And a-menden his misdede . and euer-more the bettre.'

Wit a-cordede herwith · and seide him the same :

Thoruh Wrong and hus werkes · ther was Mede yknowe,
For Wysdome and Wit tho · wenten to-gederes, 72
And toke Mede myd hem · mercy to wyne.

ȝut Pees putte forth hus hefd · and hus panne blody,
'With-oute gult, god wot · gat ich thys scathe;
Conscience knoweth hit wel · and alle the trewe comune.' 76

Ac Wyles and Wit · weren a-boute faste
To ouercome the kynge · thorw catel, yf thei myghte.

The kyng swor tho by Crist · and by his corone bothe,
That Wrong for hus workus · sholde wo tholie, 80
And comaundede a constable · to caste Wrong in yrenes,
Ther he ne sholde in seuen ȝere · see fet ne hondes.

'God wot,' quath a wis on · 'that were nat the beste;
Yf he may amendes do · let meynpryse hym haue, 84
And be borw of hys bale · and byggen hym bote,
And a-mende that ys mys-do · and euer-more the betere.'

Wit a-corded her-with · and witnessede the same;

'Hit is betere that boote · bale a-doun bringe
Then bale be beten · and boote neuer the better.' 80

Thenne Meede meokede hire · and merci bi-souhte,
And profrede Pees a present · al of pure red gold:
'Haue this of me,' quod heo · 'to amende with thi scathe,
For ichul wage for Wrong · he wol do so no more.' 84

Pees thenne pitously · preyede the kyng
To haue merci on that mon · that mis-dude him ofte:
'For he hath waget me a-mendes · as Wisdam him tauhte,
I forgiue him that gult · with a good wille; 88
So that ȝe assented beo · I con no more sigge;
For Meede hath maad me amendes · I may no more aske.'

'Bettere is that bote · bale adoun brynge, 92
Than bale be ybette · and bote neuere the bettere.'

And thanne gan Mede to mengen here · and mercy she
bisought,
And profred Pees a present · al of pure golde:
'Haue this, man, of me,' quod she · 'to amende thi skathe, 96
For I wil wage for Wronge · he wil do so namore.'

Pitously Pees thanne · prayed to the kyng
To haue mercy on that man · that mys-did hym so ofte:
'For he hath waged me wel · as Wysdome hym tauhte, 100
And I forgyue hym that gilte · with a goode wille;
So that the kyng assent · I can seye no bettere;
For Mede hath made me amendes · I may namore axe.'

'Nay,' quod the kyng tho · 'so me Cryst helpe! 104
Wronge wendeth nouȝte so awaye · arst wil I wite more;
For loupe he so liztly · laughen he wolde,
And este the balder be · to bete myne hewen;
But Resoun haue reuthe on hym · he shal rest in my stokkes,
And that as longe as he lyueth · but lowenesse hym borwe.'

Somme men redde Resoun tho · to haue reuthe on that
schrewe,

And for to conseil the kyng · and Conscience after,
That Mede moste be meynpernour · Resoun thei bisouȝte, 112

'Rede me nouȝte,' quod Resoun · 'no reuthe to haue,
Til lordes and ladies · louien alle treuthe,
And haten al harlotrye · to heren it, or to mouthen it;
Tyl Pernelles purfil · be put in here hucche; 116

‘Nay,’ quod the kyng tho · ‘so god ȝiue me blisse!
 Wrong went not so awei · til ich wite more; 92
 Lope he so lihtliche awei · lauȝwhen he wolde,
 And eft be the baldore · forte beten myne hynen;
 Bote Reson haue reuthe of him · he resteth in the stokkes
 Also longe as I lyue · bote more loue hit make.’ 96

Thenne summe radde Reson · to haue reuthe of that schrewe,
 And to counseile the kyng · and Conscience bothe,
 That Meede moste be meynpernour · Reson heo bi-souȝte.

‘Rede me not,’ quod Reson · ‘reuthe to haue, 100
 Til lordes, and ladies · louen alle treuthe,
 And Perneles porfyl · be put in heore whucche;

‘Betere ys that bote · bale a-doun brynge, 88
 Than bale be ybete · and bote neuere the betere.’

Thanne gan Mede meken here · and mercy by-souhte,
 And profrede Pees a present · al of pure golde;
 ‘Haue this, man, of me,’ quath hue · ‘to amende thy scathe;
 For ich wol wage for Wrong · he wol do so no more.’ 93

Pytouslich Pees tho · preyede the kyng
 To haue mercy on that man · that meny tyme greuede hym—
 ‘For he hath waged me wel · as Wisdome hym tauhte; 96
 Mede hath mad myne amendes · ich may no more asken,
 So alle myne claymes ben quyt · by so the kynge asente.’

‘Nay, by Crist,’ quath the kynge · ‘for Consciences sake,
 Wrong goth nat so away · ar ich wite more; 100
 Loupe he so lyghtlich · lauhē he wolde,
 And eft be the boldere · to bete myne hewes;
 Bote Reson haue reuthe of hym · he shal reste in stockes
 As longe as ich lyue · for hus luther werkes.’ 104

Somme radde Reson tho · to haue reuthe on that shrewe,
 And for to consail the kyng · on Conscience thei lokē;
 That Mede myghte be menepernour · reson thei by-souhte.

‘Red me nat,’ quath Reson · ‘no reuthe to haue, 108
 Til lordes and ladies · louen alle treuthe,
 And haten alle harlotrie · to huyren other to mouthen hit;
 And Purneles porfil · be put in the whucche,

A. 94. hynen TUD; puple H; V *om.* C. 89. ybete I; I-bete FS;
 bete P. 90. muken P. 92. þus (*for þis*) P. 101. *After* lyghtlich P
inserts a-wey. 102. hewes I; hywes P; hynus FS. 111. wucche P.

Til children chereschinge · be chastet with ȝerdes,
 Til harlotes holynesse · be holden for an hyne; 104
 Til clerkes and knihtes · ben corteis of heore mouthes,
 And haten to don heor harlotrie · and vsun hit no more;
 Til prestes heore prechyng · preuen hit in hem-seluen,
 And don hit in dede · to drawen vs to gode; 108
 Til seint Iame beo i-souht · ther I schal a-signe,
 And no man go to Galys · bote he go for euere;
 And alle Rome-renners · for robbeours of bi-ȝonde
 Bere no seluer ouer see · that bereth signe of the kyng, 112
 Nouthen grotes ne gold i-graue · with the kynges coroune,

And childryn cherissyng · be chastyng with ȝerdes;
 And harlotes holynesse · be holden for an hyne;
 Til clerken coueitise be · to clothe the pore and to fede,
 And religious romares · *recordare* in here cloistres, 120
 As seynt Benet hem bad · Bernarde and Fraunceys;
 And til prechoures prechyng · be preued on hemseluen;
 Tyl the kynges conseil · be the comune profyte;
 Tyl bisschopes baiardes · ben beggeres chambres, 124
 Here haukes and her houndes · helpe to pore religious;
 And til seynt Iames be souȝte · there I shal assigne,

That no man go to Galis · but if he go for euere;
 And alle Rome-renneres · for robberes of byȝonde 128
 Bere no siluer ouer see · that signe of kyng sheweth,
 Noyther graue ne vngraue · golde noither siluer,
 Vppon forseture of that fee · who so fynt hym at Douere,
 But if it be marchaunt or his man · or messagere with letteres, 132

Prouysoure or prest · or penaunt for his synnes.

And ȝet, quod Resoun, 'bi the rode · I shal no reuthe haue,
 While Mede hath the maistrye · in this moot-halle.
 Ac I may shewe ensaumples · as I se other-while; 136
 I sey it by my-self, quod he · 'and it so were
 That I were kyng with crowne · to kepen a rewme,
 Shulde neuere wronge in this worlde · that I wite myȝte,
 Ben vnpunished in my powere · for peril of my soule! 140

Vppon forfet of that fe · hose hit fynde at Douere,
 Bote hit beo marchaund othur his men · or messenger with lettres,
 Or prouisours or preestes · that popes a-vaunset. 116

And 3it,' quod Reson, 'bi the roode · I schal no reuthe haue,
 While Meede hath eny maystrie to mooten in this halle;
 Ac y mai schewe 3ow ensamples · y seie be myselue.

For I sigge hit for my soule · and hit so weore 120
 That ich weore kyng with croune · to kepen a reame,
 Scholde neuer wrong in this world · that ich i-wite mihte,
 Ben vn-punissched beo my pouwer · for peril of my soule!

And children cherissing · be chastet with 3erdes, 112
 And harlotes holynesse · be an hey ferye;

Til klerken couetise · be cloth for the poure,
 Here pelure and here palfrayes · poure menne lyflode,
 And religious out-ryders · reclused in here cloistres, 116

And be as Benit hem bad · Domenik and Fraunceis;
 Tyl that lerede men lyue · as thei lere and techen,
 And til the kynges consayl · be al comune profit;

Tyl bisshopes ben bakers · brewers and taylours, 120
 For alle manere men · that thei fyndeth nedfol;
 Tyl seynt Iame be souht · ther poure syke lyggen,

In prisons and in poore cotes · for pilgrymages to Rome,
 So that non go to Galys · bote it be for euere; 124
 And alle Rome-renners · for robbers in Fraunce

Bere no suluer ouer see · that kynges sygne sheweth,
 Neither graue ne vngraue · of gold ne of suluer,
 Vp forfeiture of the fee · ho so fynt hym ouerwarde, 128

Bote it be marchaunt other hus man · other messenger with
 lettres,

Prouisour other prest · other penaunt for hus synnes.

And 3ut,' quath Reson, 'by the rode · ich shall no reuthe haue,
 Whyl Mede hath the maistrye · ther motyng is atte barre. 132

Ac ich may seye ensamples · as ich see othere;
 Ich seye it for my-selue,' quath Reson · 'and hit so were,
 That ich were kyng with corone · to kepe eny reame,

Shold neuere wronge in this worlde · that ich wite myghte, 136
 Be vnpunysshed in my power · for peril of my soule,

Ne gete grace thorw ȝift · so me god helpe! 124
 Ne for meede haue merci · but mekenesse hit make.
 For *nullum malum* the mon mette · with *inpunitum*,
 And bad *nullum bonum* · be *irremuneratum*.
 Let thi clerk, sire kyng · construe this in Englisch; 128
 And ȝif thou worchest hit in wit · ich wedde bothe myn eres,
 That Lawe schal ben a laborer · and leden a-feld dounge,
 And Loue schal leden thi lond · as the leof lyketh.'
 Clerkes that were confessours · coupled hem to-gedere, 132

Ne gete my grace for giftes · so me God saue!
 Ne for no mede haue mercy · but mekenesse it make.
 For *nullum malum* the man · mette with *inpunitum*,
 And badde *nullum bonum* · be *irremuneratum*. 144
 Late ȝowre confessoure, sire kyng · construe this vnglosed;
 And ȝif ȝe worken it in werke · I wedde myne eres,
 That Lawe shal ben a laborere · and lede a-felde donge,
 And Loue shal lede thi londe · as the lief lyketh! 148
 Clerkes that were confessoures · coupled hem togideres,
 Alle to construe this clause · and for the kynges profit,
 Ac nouȝte for conforte of the comune · ne for the kynges soule.
 For I seiȝe Mede in the moot-halle · on men of lawe wynke, 152
 And thei lawghyng lope to hire · and lafte Resoun manye.
 Waryn Wisdome · wynked vpon Mede,
 And seide, 'Madame, I am ȝowre man · what so my mouth
 Iangleth;
 I falle in floreines,' quod that freke · 'an faile speche ofte.' 156
 Alle riȝtful recorded · that Resoun treuthe · tolde,
 And Witt acorded ther-with · and comended his wordes,
 And the moste peple in the halle · and manye of the grete,
 And leten Mekenesse a maistre · and Mede a mansed schrewe.
 Loue lete of hir lizte · and Lewte ȝit lasse, 161
 And seide it so heȝe · that al the halle it herde,
 'Who-so wilneth hir to wyf · for welth of her godis,
 But he be knowe for a koke-wolde · kut of my nose!' 164
 Mede mourned tho · and made heuy chere,
 For the moste comune of that courte · called hire an hore.
 Ac a sysoure and a sompnoure · sued hir faste,

Forte construe this clause · and distinkte hit after.
 Whon Reson to this reynkes · rehersed theose wordes,
 Nas non in that moot-halle · more ne lasse, 135
 That ne held Reson a mayster tho · and Meede a muche wrecche.
 Loue lette of Meede luite · and louh hire to scorn,
 And seide hit so loude · that sothnesse hit herde,
 ‘Hose wilneth hire to wyue · for weolthe of hire godes,
 Bote he beo a cokewold i-kore · cut of bothe myn eres!’ 140

Ne gete my grace thorw eny gyft · ne glosyng speche,
 Ne thorw mede do mercy · by Marye of heuene!
 For man, *nullum malum* · mette with *impunitum*, 140
 And bad that *nullum bonum* · bee *irremuneratum*.
 Lete thy confessour, syre kyng · construe this in English,
 And 3if 3e worchen hit in werke · ich wedde bothe myn handes,
 That lawe shal be a laborer · and lede a felde donge, 144
 And loue shal lede thy land · as the leef lyketh.’

Clerkus that were confessours · couplede hem to-gederes,
 To construe this clause · kyndeliche what hit menede.

Mede in the mote-halle tho · on men of lawe gan wynke, 148
 In sygne that thei sholde · with som sotel speche
 Reherce tho a-non ryght · that myghte Reson stoppe.

And alle ryghtful recordeden · that Reson treuthe seyde,
 And Kynde Wit and Conscience · cortesliche thankede; 152
 Reson for hus ryght speche · riche and poure hym louede,
 And seiden, ‘we seth wel · syre Reson, by thy wordes,
 That meknesse worth mayster · ouer Mede atte laste.’
 Loue let lyght of Mede · and Leaute 3ut lasse, 156
 And cryed vp-on Conscience · the kyng hit myghte yhure,
 ‘Who so wylneth hure to wyue · for welthe of hure goodes,
 Bote he be knowe for cokewold · kut of my nose!’

Mede mornede tho · and made heuy cheere, 160
 For the comune called hure · queynte comune hore.
 A sysour and a somner tho · softeliche forth 3eden
 With Mede the mayde · out of the mot-halle.

C. 143. worten (*error for* worchen) P. 145. leef MFSF.; luf P. 147.
 wat P. 148. ȝe MFISE; ȝat P. 150. stope P. 161. called FSE; cald P.

Was nouthur Wisdam tho · ne Wittu his feere,
 That couthe warpen a word · to with-siggen Reson; 142
 Bote stareden for studiing · and stooden as bestes.

The kyng acordede, bi crist · to Resons connyng,
 And rehersedede that Reson hedde · rihtfoliche I-schewet:
 'Bote hit is hard, be myn hed · herto hit bringe, 146
 Al my lige leodes · to lede thus euene.'

And a schirenes clerke · byschrewed al the route, 168
 'For ofte haue I,' quod he · 'holpe ȝow atte barre,
 And ȝit ȝeue ȝe me neuere · the worthe of a russhe.'

The kyng called Conscience · and afterwardes Resoun,
 And recorded that Resoun · had riȝtfullich schewed, 172
 And modilich vpon Mede · with myȝte the kyng loked,
 And gan wax wrothe with lawe · for Mede almoste had shent it,
 And seide, 'thorw ȝowre lawe, as I leue · I lese many chetes;
 Mede ouer-maistrieth lawe · and moche treuthe letteth. 176

Ac Resoun shal rekene with ȝow · ȝif I regne any while,
 And deme ȝow, bi this day · as ȝe han deserued.
 Mede shal nouȝte meynprise ȝow · bi the Marie of heuene!
 I wil haue leute in lawe · and lete be al ȝowre langlyng, 180
 And as moste folke witnesseth wel · wronge shal be demed.'

Quod Conscience to the kyng · 'but the comune wil assent,
 It is ful hard, bi myn hed · here-to to brynge it,
 Alle ȝowre lige leodes · to lede thus euene.' 184

'By hym that rauȝte on the rode' · quod Resoun to the kyng,
 'But if I reule thus ȝowre rewme · rende out my guttes!
 ȝif ȝe bidden buxomnes · be of myne assente.'

'And I assent,' seith the kyng · 'by seynt Marie my lady,
 Be my conseilliche comen · of clerkis and of erlis. 189
 Ac redili, Resoun · thow shalt nouȝte ride fro me,
 For as longe as I lyue · lete the I nelle.'

'Bi him that rauhte on the roode,' · quod Reson to the kyng,
'Bote I rule thus thi reame · rend out my ribbes!
ȝif hit beo so that boxumnesse · beo at myn assent.' 150

'Ich assente,' quod the kyng · 'bi seinte Marie mi ladi,
Beo my counseil i-come · of clerkes and of erles.

Bote rediliche, Reson · thou rydest not heonnes,
For as longe as I liue · lette the I nulle.' 154

A shereyues clerk cryede · 'a! *capiatis* Mede, 164
Et saluo custodias · sed non cum carceratis.'

The kyng to his consail tho · tok Conscience and Reson,
And modiliche vp-on Mede · meny tyme lokede,
And lourede vp-on men of lawe · and lightliche seide, 168

'Thorȝ ȝoure lawe, ich leyue · ich lese menye escheytes;
Mede and men of ȝoure craft · mucche treuthe letteth.

Ac Reson shal rekene with ȝow · yf ich regne eny whyle,
And deme ȝow, by thys day · as ȝe haue deseruyd. 172

Mede shal not meynprise ȝow · by Marye of heuene,
Ich wolle haue leaute for my lawe; · let be al ȝoure Ianglyng;
By leel men and lyf-holy · my lawe shal be demyd.'

Quath Conscience to the kyng · 'with-oute the commune help,
Hit is ful hard, by myn hefd · ther-to hit to brynge,
And alle ȝoure lege ledes · to lede thus euene.' 178

'By hym that rauhte on rode' · quath Reson to the kyng,
'Bote ich rewely thus alle reames · reueth me my syght;
And brynge alle men to bowe · with-oute byter wounde,
With-oute mercement other manslauht · amenden alle reames.

'Ich wolde hit were,' quath the kyng · 'wel al a-boute.
For-thy, Reson, redelyche · thow shalt nat ryden hennes, 184
Bote be my chyf chaunceler · in chekyr and in parlement,
And Conscience in alle my courtes · be as kynges Iustice.'

'Ich a-sente,' seyde Reson · 'by so thy-self y-huyre,
Audi alteram partem · a-mong aldermen and comuners; 188
And that vnsittyng Suffraunce · ne seele ȝoure pryueie letteres,
Ne sende *supersedeas* · bote ich asente,' quath Reson;
'And ich dar legge my lyf · that Loue wol lene the suluer,
To wage thyne, and help wyne · that thow wilnest after, 192

176. whith-oute P. P om. the. 181. wonde P. 190. scynde P. 191.
ȝe IMFSE; þat P.

‘Icham redi,’ quod Reson · ‘to reste with the euere; 155
So that Conscience beo vr counseiler · kepe I no betere.’

‘I am aredy,’ quod Resoun · ‘to reste with ȝow euere, 192
So Conscience be of owre conseille · I kepe no bettere.’
‘And I graunt,’ quod the kynge · ‘godðes forbode it faile,
Als longe as owre lyf lasteth · lyue we togideres.’ 195

'I graunte gladly,' quod the kyng · 'god forbeode he fayle;
And also longe as I lyue · leue we to-gedere.' 158

More than al thy marchauns · other thy mytrede bisshopes,
Other Lumbardes of Lukes · that lyuen by lone as Iewes.' 194
The kyng comaunded Conscience tho · to congie alle hus
officers,
And receyuen tho that Reson louede; · and ryzt with that ich
a-wakede. 196

Hic explicit passus quintus.

[*Not in A-text or B-text.*]

PASSUS VI.

Incipit passus sextus.

THUS ich a-waked, god wot · whanne ich wonede on
Cornehulle,

Kytte and ich in a cote · clothed as a lollere,

And lytel y-lete by · leyue me for sothe,

Among lollares of London · and lewede heremytes; 4

For ich made of tho men · as reson me tauhte.

For as ich cam by Conscience · with Reson ich mette

In an hote heruest · whenne ich hadde myn hele,

And lymes to labore with · and louede wel fare, 8

And no dede to do · bote drynke and to slepe.

In hele and in vnite · on me aposede;

Romyng in remembraunce · thus Reson me aratede.

‘Canstow seruen,’ he seide · ‘other syngen in a churche, 12

Other coke for my cokers · other to the cart picche,

Mowe other mowen · other make bond to sheues,

Repe other be a repereyue · and a-ryse erliche,

Other haue an horne and be haywarde · and liggen oute a 16

nyghtes,

And kepe my corn in my croft · fro pykers and theeues?

Other shappe shon other clothes · other shep other kyn kepe,

Heggen other harwen · other swyn other gees dryue,

Other eny other kyns craft · that to the comune nedeth, 20

Hem that bedreden be · by-lyue to fynde?’

‘Certes,’ ich seyde · ‘and so me god helpe,

Ich am to waik to worche · with sykkel other with sythe,

And to long, leyf me · lowe for to stoupe, 24

To worchen as a workeman · eny whyle to dure.’

C. 1. wot god P. wanne P. 3. And a lytel P. y-lete IMSG; ich
let (*wrongly*) P. 6. wit P. 7. wenne P. 19. Eggen P. 20. oþer
MIFSG; P *om.* nedep IME; nudeþ P. 25. wyle P.

[*Not in A-text or B-text; see p. 118.*]

‘Thenne hauest thou londes to lyue by’ · quath Reson,
‘other lynage riche

That fynden the thy fode? · for an ydel man thou semest,
A spendour that spende mot · other a spille-tyme, 28

Other beggest thy bylyue · a-boute at menne hacches,

Other faitest vp-on Frydays · other feste-dayes in churches,

The whiche is lollarene lyf · that lytel ys preysed,

Ther ryghtfulnesse rewardeth · ryght as men deserueth, 32

Reddit unicuique iuxta opera sua.

Other thou art broke, so may be · in body other in membre,

Other ymaymed throw som mys-hap · wher-by thou myzt be
excused?’

‘Whanne ich 3ong was,’ quath ich · ‘meny 3er hennes,

My fader and my frendes · founden me to scole, 36

Tyl ich wiste wyterliche · what holy wryt menede,

And what is best for the body · as the bok telleth,

And sykerest for the soule · by so ich wolte continue.

And 3ut fond ich neuere in faith · sytthen my frendes deyden,

Lyf that me lyked · bote in thes longe clothes. 41

Yf ich by laboure sholde lyue · and lyflode deseruen,

That labour that ich lerned best · ther-with lyue ich sholde;

In eadem uocatione in qua uocati estis, manete.

And ich lyue in Londone · and on Londone bothe, 44

The lomes that ich laboure with · and lyflode deserue

Ys *pater-noster* and my prymer · *placebo* and *dirige*,

And my sauter som tyme · and my seuene psalmes.

Thus ich synge for hure soules · of suche as me helpen, 48

And tho that fynden me my fode · vouchen saf, ich trowe,

To be welcome whanne ich come · other-whyle in a monthe,

Now with hym and now with hure · and thus-gate ich begge

With-oute bagge other botel · bote my wombe one. 52

And al-so more-ouer · me thynketh, syre Reson,

Men sholde constreyne no clerke · to knauene werkes;

C. 27. hydel P. 29. ate P. 31. wiche P. 33. ert P. 34. wer-by P.
35. Wanne P. 37, 38. wat P. 42. Hyf P. 43. þer-whit P. in M;
the rest omit. *manete M; the rest omit.* 44. londone MSE; londene P.
49. vochen P. 50. wolcome P. wanne P. wyle P.

[*Not in A-text or B-text.*]

For by lawe of *Leuitici* · that oure lord ordeynede,
 Clerkes that aren crouned · of kynde vnderstondyng 56
 Sholde nother swynke ne swete · ne swere at enquestes,
 Ne fyghte in no vauntwarde · ne hus fo greue;

Non reddas malum pro malo.

For it ben aires of heuene · alle that ben crounede,
 And in queer and in kirkes · Cristes owene mynestres, 60
*Dominus pars hereditatis mee; & alibi: Clementia non
 constringit.*

Hit by-cometh for clerkus · Crist for to seruen,
 And knaues vncrouned · to cart and to worche.
 For shold no clerk be crouned · bote yf he ycome were
 Of franklens and free men · and of folke yweddede. 64
 Bondmen and bastardes · and beggers children,
 Thuse by-longeth to labour · and lordes kyn to seruen
 Bothe god and good men · as here degree asketh;
 Some to synge masses · other sitten and wryte, 68
 Rede and receyue · that reson ouhte spende;
 Ac sith bondemenne barnes · han be mad bisshopes,
 And barnes bastardes · han ben archidekenes,
 And sopers and here sones · for seluer han be knyghtes, 72
 And lordene sones here laborers · and leid here rentes to wedde,
 For the ryght of this reame · ryden a-ȝens oure enemys,
 In confort of the comune · and the kynges worshep,
 And monkes and moniales · that mendinauns sholden fynde, 76
 Han mad here kyn knyghtes · and knyghtfees purchased,
 Popes and patrones · poure gentil blod refuseth,
 And taken Symondes sone · seyntewarie to kepe.
 Lyf-holynesse and loue · han ben longe hennes, 80
 And wole, til hit be wered out · or otherwise ychaunged.
 For-thy rebuke me ryght nouht · Reson, ich ȝow praye;
 For in my conscience ich knowe · what Crist wolde that ich
 wrouhte.

C. 59. and alle P. 60. and—kirkes I; in churches P. 66. kyn to MF;
 children sholde P. 70. Ac IMSG; And P. 74. þis IMS; þes P.
 77. purchase P.

[*Not in A-text or B-text; see p. 120.*]

Preyers of a parfyt man · and penaunce discret 84

Ys the leueste labour · that oure lord pleseth.

Nom de solo, ich seide · ‘for sothe *uiuit homo*,

Nec in pane & pabulo · the *pater-noster* witnesseth;

Fiat uoluntas tua · fynt ous alle thynges.’ 88

Quath Conscience, ‘by Crist · ich can nat see this lyeth;

Ac it semeth nouht parfytnesse · in cytees for to begge,

Bote he be obediencer · to pryour other to mynstre.’

‘That ys soth,’ ich seide · ‘and so ich by-knowe, 92

That ich haue tynt tyme · and tyme mysspended;

And ȝut, ich hope, as he · that ofte haueth chaffared,

That ay hath lost and lost · and atte laste hym happed

He bouhte suche a bargayn · he was the bet euere, 96

And sette hus lost at a lef · at the laste ende,

Suche a wynnynge hym warth · thorw wordes of hus grace;

Simile est regnum celorum thesauro abscondito in agro, & celera:

Mulier que inuenit dragmam unam, et celera;

So hope ich to haue · of hym that is al-myghty

A gobet of hus grace · and bygynne a tyme, 100

That alle tymes of my tyme · to profit shal turne.’

‘Ich rede the,’ quath Reson tho · ‘rape the to by-gynne

The lyf that ys lowable · and leel to the soule’—

‘ȝe, and continue;’ quath Conscience · and to the kirke ich wente.

And to the kirke gan ich go · god to honourie, 105

By-for the crois on my knees · knocked ich my brest,

Sykinge for my synnes · seggyng my *pater-noster*,

Wepynge and wailinge · tyl ich was a slepe. 108

[*Continued on p. 123.*]

C. 84. P om. a. 88. *tuas* P. 95. atte laste EIFS; at þe latiste P.
 98. wyrdes P. *unam* M; P om. 104, 105. kirke IF; churche P. 107.
 sennes P.

PASSUS V.

Passus quintus de visione.

THE kyng and his knihtes · to the churche wenten
 To heere matyns and masse · and to the mete aftur.
 Thenne wakede I of my wink · me was wo with alle
 That I nedde sadloker i-slept · and i-seze more. 4
 Er I a furlong hedde i-fare · a feyntise me hente,
 That forther mihti not a-fote · for defaute of sleep.
 I sat softeliche a-down · and seide my beo-leeue,

PASSUS V.

Passus quintus de Visione.

THE kyng and his knightes · to the kirke wente
 To here matynes of the day · and the masse after.
 Thanne waked I of my wynkyng · and wo was with-alle,
 That I ne hadde sleped sadder · and yseizen more. 4
 Ac er I hadde faren a fourlonge · feyntise me hente,
 That I ne myzte ferther a-foot · for defaute of slepyng;
 And sat softly adown · and seide my bileue,
 And so I babeied on my bedes · thei brouzte me a-slepe. 8
 And thanne saw I moche more · than I bifore tolde,
 For I say the felde ful of folke · that I bifore of seyde,
 And how Resoun gan arrayen hym · alle the reume to preche,
 And with a crosse afor the kyng · comsed thus to techen. 12
 He preued that thise pestilences · were for pure synne,
 And the southwest wynde · on Saterdag at euene
 Was pertliche for pure pryde · and for no poynt elles.
 Piries and plomtrees · were puffed to the erthe, 16
 In ensample, 3e segges · 3e shulden do the bettere.
 Beches and brode okes · were blowen to the grounde,
 Torned vpward her tailles · in tokenyng of drede,
 That dedly synne at domesday · shal fordon hem alle. 20

And so I blaberde on my beodes · that brouhte me a-slepe. 8
 Then sauh I mucche more · then I beofore tolde,
 For I sauh the feld ful of folk · that ich of bi-fore schewede,
 And Concience with a crois · com for to preche.

He preide the peple · haue pite of hem-selue, 12
 And preuede that this pestilences · weore for puire synne,
 And this south-westerne wynt · on a Seterday at euen
 Was a-perteliche for pruide · and for no poynt elles.
 Piries and plomtres · weore passchet to the grounde, 16
 In ensauple to men · that we scholde do the bettre.
 Beches and brode okes · weore blowen to the eorthe,
 And turned vpward the tayl · in toknyng of drede
 That dedly synne or domesday · schulde fordon hem alle. 20

[*Continued from p. 121.*]

Thenne mette me moche more · than ich by-fore tolde
 Of the mater that ich mette fyrst · on Maluerne hulles.
 Ich sauh the feld ful of folk · fram ende to other,
 And Reson reuested · ryzt as a pope, 112
 And Conscience his crocer · by-fore the kynge stande.

Reson reuerentliche · by-for al the reame
 Prechede, and prouede · that thuse pestilences
 Was for pure synne · to punyshe the puple; 116
 And the south-west wynd · on Saterdag at eue
 Was pertelich for prude · and for no poynt elles.
 Piries and plomtrees · were poffed to the erthe
 In ensample to syggen ous · we sholde do the betere; 120
 Beches and brode okes · weren blowe to the grounde,
 And turned vpward here tayl · in tokenynge of drede
 That dedlich synne er domys day · shal for-do ous alle.

Of this matere I mihte · momele ful longe,
 Bote I sigge as I sauh · (so me god helpe)!
 How Concience with a cros · comsede to preche.

He bad wastors go worche · what thei best couthe, 24
 And wynne that thei wasteden · with sum maner craft.

He preizede Pernel · hire porfil to leue,
 And kepen hit in hire cofre · for catel at neode.
 Thomas he tauzte · to take twey staues, 28

Of this matere I myzte · mamely ful longe,
 Ac I shal seye as I saw · so me god helpe!
 How pertly afor the poeple · Resoun gan to preche.

He bad wastoure go worche · what he best couthe, 24
 And wynnen his wastyng · with somme manere crafte.

And preyed Peronelle · her purfyle to lete,
 And kepe it in hir cofre · for catel at hire nede.

Thomme Stowue he tauzte · to take two staues, 28
 And fecche Felice home · fro the wyuen pyne.

He warned Watt · his wyf was to blame,
 That hire hed was worth halue a marke · his hode nouzte
 worth a grote.

And bad Bette kut · a bow other tweyne, 32
 And bete Betoun ther-with · but if she wolde worche.
 And thanne he charged chapmen · to chasten her childeren;
 Late no wynnyng hem forweny · whil thei be 3onge,
 Ne for no pouse of pestilence · plese hem nouzte out of
 resoun. 36

‘ My syre seyde so to me · and so did my dame,
 That the leuere childe · the more lore bihoueth,
 And Salamon seide the same · that Sapience made,

Qui parcil virge, odit filium.

The Englich of this latyn is · who-so wil it knowe, 40
 Who-so spareth the spryng · spilleth his children.’

And sithen he preyed prelatz · and prestes to-gideres,
 ‘ That 3e prechen to the peple · preue it on 3owre-seluen,
 And doth it in dede · it shal drawe 3ow to good; 44
 If 3e lyuen as 3e leren vs · we shal leue 3ow the bettere.’

And fette hom Felice · from wyuene pyne.

He warnede Watte · his wyf was to blame,
That hire hed was worth a mark · and his hod worth a grote.

He chargede chapmen · to chasten heore children; 32
Let hem wonte non eize · while that thei ben 3onge.

He preyede preestes · and prelates to-gedere,
That thei prechen the peple · to preuen hit in hem-seluen—
'And libben as 3e lereth vs · we wolen loue ow the betere.' 36

Of this master ich myghte · momely ful longe, 124
Ac ich shal seye as ich seih · slepynge, as it were,
How Reson radde al the reame · ryght for to lyuen.

He bad wastours go worche · and wynne here sustinaunce
Thorw som trewe trauail · and no tyme spille. 128

He preide Purnele · here porfil to leue,
And kepe hit in here cofre · for catell at hure nede.
He tauhte Thomme Stowe · to take two staues,
And fecche Felice home · fram wyuen pyne. 132

He warnede Watte · hus wif was to blame,
For hure hefd was worth half mark · and hus hod nat a grote.
He bad Bette go kutte · a bowh other tweye,
And bete Beton ther-myd · bote hue wolde worche. 136

He charged chapmen · to chasten here children,
And lete no wynnyng for-wene hem · the while thei ben
3onge;

For ho so spareth the spring · spilleth hus children;
And so wrot the wise · to wissen us alle, 140
Qui parcit uirge, odit filium.

And sitthe he preide prelates · and prestes to-geders,
That hij precheth to the puple · prouen hit hem-selue;

'Lyue 3e as 3e lereth 'ous · we shulleth leyue 3ow the bettere.'

C. 124. ful IMFSEG; wel P. 130. nude P. 131. stowe E; stone P.
136. he (for hue) P. 138. wile P. 140. wisen hus P.

Whanne fisshes faile the flood · or the fresshe watir,
 Thei diȝe for the drouȝte · whanne thei dreize lengen;
 Rȝt so be religioun · it roileth and steruith, 206
 That out of couent and cloistre · conceiten to libben.
 Ac now is religioun a ridere · and a rennere aboute,
 A ledere of louedayes · and a lond-biggere,
 Poperith on a palfrey · to toune and to toune.] 210

And sitthe he radde religion · here ruele to holde, 144
 ‘Leste the kyng and hus consail · ȝoure comunes a-peyre,
 And be stywardes of ȝoure stedes · til ȝe be stewed betere.

Gregorie the grete clerk · gart write in bokes
 The ruele of alle religious · ryghtful and obedient. 148
 Right as fisshes in flod · whenne hem faileth water,
 Deyen for drouthe · whenne thei drye liggen,
 Ryght so religion · roteth and sterueth,
 That out of couent and cloistre · coueyteth to dwelle. 152
 For yf heuene be on thys erthe · other eny eyse for saule,
 Hit is in cloistre other in scole · by meny skyles ich fynde.
 For in cloistre cometh no man · to chide ne to fighte;
 In scole ys loue and lownesse · and lykyng to lerne. 156
 Ac meny day, men telleth · bothe monkes and chanouns
 Han ride out of a-ray · here ruele vuel yholde,
 Lederes of louedaies · and landes purchassed,
 And priked a-boute on palfrais · fro places to maners, 160
 An hepe of houndes at hus ers · as he a lord were;
 And but hus knaue knele · that shal hus coppe holde,
 He loketh al louryng · and ‘lordein’ hym calleth.
 Lytel hadde lordes a-do · to ȝeue londe fro here aires 164
 To religious, that han no reuthe · thauh hit reyne on here
 auters.

In places ther thei persons beth · by hem-self at ese,
 Of the poure han thei no pyte · that is here pure charite.
 ȝe leten ȝow alle as lordes · ȝoure londe lyth to bȝode. 168
 Ac ȝut shal come a kyng · and confesse ȝow alle,
 And bete ȝow, as the byble telleth · for brekyng of ȝoure reule,
 And amende ȝow monkes · moniales, and chanons,
 And putte ȝow to ȝoure penaunce · *ad pristinum statum ire.* 172

MFS; bit P. 163. loureng P. lordein IME; lorden P. 165. religious
 IMFSE; religion P. ryne P. on IMFSG; in P. 167. his (for is) P.
 poure (for pure) P.

And ȝe that secheth seynt Iame · and seintes at Roome, 40
Secheth seint Treuthe · for he may sauē ow alle ;

And barounes with erles beten hem · thorough *beatus virres* techynge,
That here barnes claymen · and blame ȝow foule :
 Hij in curribus, et hij in equis ; ipsi obligati sunt, &c.
And thanne freres in here freitoure · shal fynden a keye ·
Of Constantynes coffres · in which is the catel 324
That Gregories god-children · han yuel dispended.
And thanne shal the abbot of Abyndoun · and alle his issu for euere
Haue a knokke of a kyng · and incurable the wounde.
That this worth soth, seke ȝe · that oft ouer-se the bible :
 Quomodo cessauit exactor, quicuit tributum ; contriuit
 dominus baculum impiorum, et virgam dominancium
 cedencium plaga insanabili, &c.
Ac ar that kyng come · Cayme shal awake.] 329

And sithen he conseilled the kyng · the comune to louye,
'It is thi tresore, if tresoun ne were · and triacle at thi nede.'

And sithen he prayed the pope · haue pite on holicherche,
And er he gyue any grace · gouerne firste hym-selue. 52
'And ȝe that han lawes to kepe · late treuthe be ȝowre
coueytise,
More than golde or other gyftes · if ȝe wil god plese ;
For who-so contrarieth treuthe · he telleth in the gospel,
That god knoweth hym nouȝte · ne no seynte of heuene, 56
 Amen dico vobis, nescio vos.

And ȝe that seke seynte Iames · and seintes of Rome,
Seketh seynt Treuthe · for he may saue ȝow alle ;
Qui cum patre et filio · that feire hem bifalle
That suweth my sermon ;' · and thus seyde Resoun. 60

C. 174. fretour P. 176. costantyn P. 177. ȝs (for hys) P. 178.
wonde P. 180. Read kirke. 190. he IMSEG ; ȝe P. hoȝer P.
194. ouere. 199. Seicheȝ P.

Qui cum patre et filio · feire mote you falle.'

And barons and here barnes · blame ȝow and reproue;

Hii in curribus et hi in equis: ipsi obligati sunt, et ceciderunt.

Freres in here freitour · shulle fynde that tyme

Bred with-oute beggyng · to lyue by euere after,

And Constantyn shal be here cook · and couerer of here
churche. 176

For the abbot of Engelonde · and the abbessse hys nece

Shullen haue a knok on here crounes · and in-curable the
wounde;

*Contriuit dominus baculum impiorum, uirgam dominancium,
plaga in-sanabili.*

Ac er that kyng come · as cronycles me tolde,

Clerkus and holychurche · shal be clothed newe. 180

And sitthe he consailed the kyng · hus comune to louye;

For the comune ys the kynges tresour · conscience wot wel,

And al-so,' quath Reson · 'ich rede ȝow riche,

And comuners to a-corden · in alle kynne treuthe. 184

Let no kynne consail · ne couetyse ȝow departe,

That on wit and on wil · alle ȝoure wardes kepe.

Lo! in heuene an hy · was an holy comune,

Til Lucifer the lyere · leyued that hym-selue 188

Were wittyour and worthiour · than he that was hus maister.

Hold ȝow in vnite · and he that other wolde

Ys cause of alle combraunce · to confounde a reame.'

And sitthen he preide the pope · haue pyte of holy-churche,

And no grace to graunte · til good loue were 193

Among alle kynne kynges · ouer cristene puple:

'Comaunde that alle confessours · that eny kynge shryueth,

Enioynye hem pees for here penaunce · and perpetuel forȝeuenesse

Of alle manere acciouns · and eche man loue other. 197

And ȝe that secheth seint Iame · and seyntes of Rome,

Secheth seint Treuthe · in sauacion of ȝoure saules:

Qui cum patre et filio · that faire hem by-falle 200

That suweth my sarmon' · and thus ended Reson.

Hic explicit passus sextus.

Thenne ron Repentaunce · and rehersed this teeme,
And made William to weope · watur with his eȝen. 44

Pernel Proud-herte · platte hire to grounde,
And lay longe ar heo lokede · and to vr ladi criede,
And beo-hiȝte to him · that vs alle maade,
Heo wolde vn-souwen hire smok · and setten ther an here 48

Thanne ran Repentance · and reherced his teme,
And gert Wille to wepe · water with his eyen.

SUPERBIA.

Peronelle Proude-herte · platte hir to the erthe,
And lay longe ar she loked · and ‘lorde, mercy!’ cryed, 64
And byhiȝte to hym · that vs alle made,
She shulde vnsowen hir serke · and sette there an heyre
To affaiten hire flesshe · that fierce was to synne :
‘Shal neuere heiȝe herte me hente · but holde me lowe, 68
And suffre to be myssayde— · and so did I neuere.
But now wil I meke me · and mercy biseche,
For al this I haue · hated in myne herte.’

C. N.B. *The errors in P, involving misuse of h, are henceforth silently corrected.* 6. vnsywe P. 8. heigh I; hy FS; hi M; myn P. 10. muke P. 21. and al my wit P. vuel (*for* yuel) P; *see* l. 20.
22. P *om.* ich.

Forte fayten hire flesch · that frele was to synne:
 ‘Schal neuer liht herte me hente · bote holde me lowe,
 And suffre to beo mis-seid— · and so dude I neuere.
 And nou I con wel meke me · and merci be-seche 52
 Of al that ichaue i-had · envye in myn herte.’

PASSUS VII.

Incipit passus septimus.

WITH that ran Repentaunce · and reherced hus teme,
 And made Wille to wepe · water with hus ·eyen.
 Purnele Proute-herte · platte hure to the erthe,
 Longe was er hue loked vp · and ‘lord, mercy,’ criede, 4
 And by-highte to hym · that ous alle made,
 Hue sholde vnsowen hure smok · and sette ther an heire,
 To afaiten hure flesch · that fers was to synne.
 ‘Shal neuere heigh herte me hente · bote holde me lowe, 8
 And suffre to be myssaide · and so dude ich neuere.
 Bote now wolle ich meke me · and mercy by-seche
 Of alle that ich haue · yhated in myn herte.’
 ‘Repente the,’ quath Repentaunce · ‘as Reson the tauhte, 12
 And shryf the sharpliche · and shak of alle pruyde.’—

CONFESSIO SUPERBIE.

‘Ich, Pruyde, pacientliche · penaunce ich aske;
 For ich formest and ferst · to fader and to moder
 Haue ybe vnboxome · ich biseche god of mercy; 16
 And vnboxome ybe · nouht a-baissed to a-gulte
 God and alle good men · so gret was myn herte;
 In-obedient to holy churche · and to hem that ther seruen;
 Demed for hure yuel vices · and excited othere 20
 Thorw my word and my wit · hure yuel workes to shewe;
 And scorned hem and othere · yf ich a skyle founde,
 Lauhyng al a-loude · for lewede men sholde
 Wene that ich were witty · and wyser than a-nothere; 24
 Scorner and vnskilful · to hem that skil shewede,
 In alle manere maners · my name to be yknowe;

[*Not in A-text.*]

From
B. xiii.
278-284.

[As in aparaile and in porte · proude amonges the peple,
Otherwyse than he hath · with herte or syȝte shewynge;
Hym willynge that alle men wende · he were that he is nouȝte.
For-why he bosteth and braggeth · with many bolde othes, 281
And in-obedient to ben vndernome · of any lyf lyuyngē,
And so syngulere by-hymself · as to syȝte of the poeple,
Was none suche as hym-self · ne none so pope-holy.] 284

From
B. xiii.
292-313.

[Wilnyng that men wende . his witte were the best, 292
Or for his crafty kunnyngē · or of clerkes the wisest,
Or strengest on stede · or styuest vnder gurdel,
And louelokest to loken on · and lelest of werkes,
And non so holy as he · ne of lif clennerē, 296
Or feyrest of feytures · of fourme and of schafte,
And most sotyl of songe · other sleyest of hondes,
And large to lene · losse there-by to cacche;
And if he gyueth ouȝte pore gomes · telle what he deleth; 300
Pore of possessioun · in purse and in coffre,
And as a lyon on to loke · and lordeliche of speche.
Baldest of beggeres · a bostour that nouȝt hath,
In towne and in tauernes · tales to telle, 304
And segge thinge that he neuere seigh · and for soth sweren it;
Of dedes that he neuere dyd · demen and bosten,
And of werkes that he wel dyd · witnesse and seggen—
'Lo! if ȝe leue me nouȝt · or that I lye wenen, 308
Axeth at hym or at hym · and he ȝow can telle,
What I suffred and seighe · and some tymes hadde,
And what I couthe and knewe · and what kynne I come of.'
Al he wolde that men wiste · of werkes and of wordes, 312
Which myȝte plese the peple · and praysen hymselfen:
*Si hominibus placerem, Christi seruus non essem;
Et alibi: nemo potest duobus dominis seruire.]*

C. 27. Semeng P. 32. Me wilnyngē *must be right*; cf. Hym willnyngē.
the reading of R for Hym willyngē in B. xiii. 280; miswritten Me wynnyngē
I; Me wilned PESG. P om. as. 35. -nemyngē P. 36. singeler P.
37. pope F; pop IMSG; pomp P. 38. in on M; on a P. on anoȝer P.
43. my stede P. 44. lykynggest P. 51. pouhte P. 58. and MF;
and of IS; of P. 60. P om. be.

[*Not in A-text.*]

Semyng a souereyn on · wher-so me by-fulle
 To telle eny tale · ich trowede me wiser 28
 To carpen other to counsaile · than eny lered other lewede.
 Prout of aparail · in porte amonge the puple
 Other-wise than ich haue · with-ynne other with-oute,
 Me wilnyng that men wende · ich were, as in aueyr, 32
 Riche, and resonable · and ryghtful of lyuyng,
 Bostynge and braggyng · wyth meny bolde othes,
 Auauntyng vp-on my veine glorie · for eny vndernymyng;
 And ȝut so synguler by my-self · as to sight of the puple, 36
 Was non suche as my-self · ne non so pope-holy,
 Som tyme in on secte · som tyme in another;
 In alle kynne couetyse · contreuede how ich myghte
 Be holde for holy · an hondred sithe, by that encheison; 40
 Wilnede that men wende · my werkes were the beste,
 And konnyngest of my craft · clerkes other othere,
 And strengest vp-on stede · and styuest vnder gurdell,
 And louelokest to loken on · and lykyngest a bedde; 44
 And lykyng of such a lif · that no lawe preyseth,
 Prout of my faire fetours · and for ich songe shulle.
 And what ich gaf for godes loue · to god-sybbes ich tolde,
 Thei to wene that ich were · wel holy and wel almesful, 48
 And non so bold beggere · to bydden and craue;
 Tales to telle · in tauernes and in stretes,
 Thyng that neuere was thouht · and ȝut ich swor ich sauh hit,
 And lyed on my lykame · and on my lyf bothe. 52
 Of werkes that ich wel dude · wittnesse ich take,
 And sygge to suche · that sytten me by-syde,
 ‘Lo, yf ȝe leyue me nouht · other that ȝe wene ich lye,
 Aske of hym other of hure · and thei conne ȝow telle 56
 What ich soffrede and seih · and som tyme hadde,
 And what ich knew and couthe · and what kyn ich kam of;’—
 Al ich wolde that men wuste · when hit to pruyde sounede,
 As to be preised a-mong the puple · thauh ich poure semede:
Si hominibus placerem, Christi seruus non essem.
Nemo potest duobus dominis seruire.

‘Now god of hus goodnesse · geue the grace to amende,’ 61
 Quath Repentaunce ryght with that; · and thenne roos Enuye.

Lechour seide 'allas!' · and to vr ladi criede
 To maken him han merci · for his misdede,
 Bitwene god almihti · and his pore soule, 56
 With-that he schulde the Seterday · seuen 3er after
 Drinken bote with the doke · and dynen but ones.

Envye with heui herte · asket aftur schrift,
 And gretliche his gultus · bi-ginneth to schewe. 60
 As pale as a pelet · in a palesye he seemede,
 I-clothed in a caurimauri · I couthe him not discreue;
 A kertil and a courtepy · a knyf be his side;

LUXURIA.

Thanne Lecchoure seyde 'allas!' · and on owre lady he
 cryed, 72
 To make mercy for his mis-dedes · bitwene god and his
 soule,
 With that he shulde the Saterdag · seuene 3ere there-after,
 Drynke but myd the doke · and dyne but ones.

INUIDIA.

Enuye with heuy herte · asked after schrifte, 76
 And carefullich *mea culpa* · he comsed to shewe.
 He was as pale as a pelet · in the palsye he semed,
 And clothed in a caurimaury · I couthe it nouzte discreue;
 In kirtel and kourteby · and a knyf bi his syde, 80
 Of a freres frokke · were the forsleues.
 And as a leke hadde yleye · longe in the sonne,
 So loked he with lene chekes · lourynge foule.

His body was to-bolle for wratthe · that he bote his lippes,
 And wryngynge he 3ede with the fiste · to wreke hymself he
 thouzte 85

With werkes or with wordes · whan he seighe his tyme.
 Eche a worde that he warpe · was of an addres tonge,
 Of chydyng and of chalangynge · was his chief lyflode, 88
 With bakbityng and bismar · and beryng of fals witnesse;
 This was al his curteisye · where that euere he shewed hym.

'I wolde ben yshryue,' quod this schrewe · 'and I for shame
 durst;
 I wolde be gladder, bi god · that Gybbe had meschaunce, 92
 Than thouze I had this woke ywonne · a weye of Essex chese.

Of a freris frokke · were the fore-sleuys. 64
 As a leek that hedde i-leizen · longe in the sonne,
 So loked he with lene chekes; · lourede he foule.
 His bodi was bolled · for wraththe he bot his lippes.
 Wrothliche he wrong his fust · he thouzte him a-wreke 68
 With werkes or with wordes · whon he seiz his tyme.
 ‘Venim or vernisch · or vinegre, I trouwe,
 Walleth in my wombe · or waxeth, ich wene.
 I ne mihte mony day don · as a mon ouhte, 72
 Such wynt in my wombe · waxeth, er I dyne.

From [Thenne seide Lecherie ‘alas!’ · and to oure lady cryede,
C. vii. ‘Lady, to thy leue sone · lowte for me nouthe,
 170-174. That he haue pyte on me putour · of hus pure grace and mercy,
 With that ich shal,’ quath that shrewe · ‘Saterdayes, for thy loue,
 Drynke bote with the douke · and dyne bote ones.]

CONFESSIO INUIDIE.

Enuye with heuy herte · asked after shrifte,
 And criede ‘*mea culpa*’ · corsynge alle hus enemys. 64
 Hus clothes were of corsement · and of kene wordes;

He wroth hus fust vp-on Wratthe · hadde he wysshes at wille,
 Sholde no lyf lyuye · that on hus londe passede.

Chidyng and Ianglyng · that was hus chef lyflode, 68

A. 58. dyne TU; eten VH; *read* dynen. 63 64. *From* THU; V *omits*
these lines. 73. dye (*for* dyne) V. B. 76. *scris* L. C. 68.
 Iangleng P.

Ichaue a neihzebor me neih · I haue anuyzed him ofte,
 Ablamed him be-hynde his bak · to bringe him in disclaundre,
 And peired him bi my pouwer · i-punissched him ful ofte, 76
 Bi-lowen him to lordes · to make him leose seluer,
 I-don his frendes ben his fon · with my false tonge;
 His grase and his good hap · greueth me ful sore.

Bitwene him and his meyne · ichaue i-mad wraththe, 80
 Bothe his lyf and his leome · was lost thorw my tonge.
 Whon I mette him in the market · that I most hate,
 Ich heilede him as hendely · as I his frend weore.
 He is douztioire then I · i dar non harm don him. 84
 Bote hedde I maystrie and miht · I mortherde him for euere!
 Whon I come to the churche · and knele bi-fore the roode,

I haue a neighbore neyze me · I haue ennuyed hym ofte,
 And lowen on hym to lordes · to don hym lese his siluer,
 And made his frendes ben his foon · thorw my false tonge; 96
 His grace and his good happes · greueth me ful sore.

Bitwene many and many · I make debate ofte,
 That bothe lyf and lyme · is lost thorw my speche.
 And whan I mete him in market · that I moste hate, 100
 I hailse hym hendeliche · as I his frende were;
 For he is douztier than I · I dar do non other.
 Ac hadde I maystrye and myzte · god wote my wille!

And whan I come to the kirke · and sholde knele to the
 rode, 104
 And preye for the poeple · as the prest techeth,
 For pilgrimes and for palmers · for alle the poeple after,
 Thanne I crye on my knees · that Cryste ȝif hem sorwe
 That beren away my bolle · and my broke schete. 108

Away fro the auter thanne · turne I myn eyghen,
 And biholde how Eleyne · hath a newe cote;
 I wisshe thanne it were myne · and al the webbe after.
 And of mennes lesynge I laughe · that liketh myn herte;
 And for her wynnyng I wepe · and waille the tyme, 113
 And deme that hij don ille · there I do wel worse;
 Who-so vndernymeth me here-of · I hate hym dedly after.
 I wolde that vche a wyght · were my knaue, 116
 For who-so hath more than I · that angreth me sore.
 And thus I lyue louelees · lyke a luther dogge,

And scholde preize for the peple · as the prest vs techeth,
 Thenne I crie vppon my knes · that Crist giue hem serwe 88
 That hath i-bore a-wei my bolle · and my brode schete.

From the auter I turne · myn eize, and bi-holde
 Hon Heyne hath a newe cote · and his wyf another;
 Thenne I wussche hit weore myn · and al the web aftur. 92
 Of his leosinge I lauhwe · hit liketh me in myn herte;
 Ac for his wynnyngge I wepe · and weile the tyme.

I deme men that don ille · and 3it I do wel worse,
 For I wolde that vch a wiht · in this world were mi knaue, 96
 And who-so hath more thanne I · that angrith myn herte.

Thus I liue loueles · lyk a luther dogge,

[*Not in C-text.*]

A. 83. as—frend THU; his frend as I V. 97. *From* THU; V *omits this line.* **B.** 105. pople L; *see next line.* 108. beren W; baren C; bar L.

That al my breste bolleth · for bitter of my galle;
 May no suger so swete · a-swagen hit vnnethe, 100
 Ne no *diopendion* · dryue hit from myn herte;
 3if schrift schulde hit thenne swopen out · a gret wonder hit were.'

That al my body bolneth · for bitter of my galle.

[And blame men bihynde her bakke · and bydden hem meschaunce;
 And that he wist bi Wille · tellen it Watte,
 And that Watte wiste · Wille wiste it after,
 And made of frendes foos · thorough a false tonge, 328
 'Or with myzte of mouthe · or thorough mannes strengthe
 Auenge me fele tymes · other frete my-selue
 Wyth-inne, as a shepster shere' · I-shrewed men and cursed!

*Cuius malediccione os plenum est, et amaritudine;
 Sub lingua eius labor et dolor:*

Et alibi: filij hominum, dentes eorum arma et sagitte,

Et lingua eorum gladius acutus:—

From
 B. xiii.
 325-342.

'There is no lyf that I louye · lastyng any while, 332
 For tales that I telle · no man trusteth to me;
 And whan I may nouȝt haue the maistrye · with malencolye I take,
 That I cacche the crompe · the cardiacle some tyme,
 Or an ague in suche an angre · and some tyme a feure, 336
 That taketh me al a twelfmoneth · tyl that I dispyse
 Lechecraft of owre lorde · and leue on a wicche,
 And segge, that no clerke ne can · ne Cryste, as I leue,
 To the souter of Southwerke · or of Shordyche dame Emme! 340
 And segge, that no goddes worde · gaf me neuere bote,
 But thorw a charme had I chaunce · and my chief hele!']

I myzte nouȝte eet many ȝeres · as a man ouȝte, 120
 For enuye and yuel wille · is yuel to defye;
 May no sugre ne swete thinge · asswage my swellynge,
 Ne no *diapenidion* · dryue it fro myne herte,
 Ne noyther schrifte ne shame · but ho-so schrape my mawe?'
 '3us, redili,' quod Repentaunce · and radde hym to the beste,
 'Sorwe of synnes · is sauacioun of soules.'

'I am sori,' quod that segge · 'I am but selde other,
 And that maketh me thus megre · for I ne may me venge. 128
 Amonges burgeyses haue I be · dwellynge at Londoun,
 And gert bakbitinge be a brocoure · to blame mennes ware.

'ȝus, rediliche,' quod Repentaunce · and radde him to goode,
'Serw for heore sunnes · saueth men ful monye.' 104

'Icham sori,' quod Envy · 'I ne am but seldene other,
And that maketh me so mad · for I ne may me venge.'

And blame men by-hynde hure bak · and bidde hem mes-
chaunce.

Al that he wiste by Wylle · to Watkyn he told hit,
And that he wiste by Watkyn · tolde hit Wille after;
And made foos of frendes · thorw fals and fykel tonge: 72

'Other thorw myghte of mouthe · other thorw meny sleighthes
Venged me fele tymes · other brend my-self with-ynne
Lyke a shappesters sheres · and shrewede myn emcristyne,
Aȝens the consail of Crist · as clerkes fynden in bokes: 76

*Cuius maledictione os plenum est et amaritudine et dolo: sub
lingua eius labor et dolor.*

*Filij hominum, dentes eorum arma et sagille, et lingua eorum
gladius acutus.*

Whenne ich ne may haue the maistrie · suche malancolie ich take,
That ich cacche the crampe · the cardiacle som tyme,
Other an ague in suche an angre · and som tyme a feuere,
That taketh me al a twelfmonthe · til that ich dispice 80

Leche-craft of oure lorde · and leyue on a wicche,
And sigge that no clerk can · ne Crist, as ich leyue,
To the souter of South-werk · such is hus 'grace.
For god, ne godes wordes · ne grace ne halp neuere, 84
Bote thorw a charme hadde ich a chaunce · and my chief hele.

Ich myghte nat ete meny ȝer · as a man auhte,
For enuye and vuel wil · ys vuel to defye.
May no suger ne swete thyng · a-swage my swellynges, 88
Ne dereworthe drynke · dryuen hit fro myn herte,
Neyther shame ne shrift · bote ho so shraped my mawe?'

'ȝus, redilyche,' quath Repentaunce · 'and thow be ryght sory,
For thy synne soueraynliche · by-sechyng god of mercy.' 92

'Ich am euere sory,' sayde Enuye · 'ich am bote selde other;
That maketh me so megre · for ich ne may me auenge.
ȝut am ich brocor of bakbytynge · and blame mennes ware
A-mong marchauns many tymes · nameliche in Londoun; 96

[*Not in A-text.*]

Whan he solde and I nouȝte · thanne was I redy 131
 To lye and to loure on my neighbore · and to lakke his chaffare.

I wil amende this, ȝif I may · thorw myȝte of God almyȝty.'

IRA.

Now awaketh Wratthe · with two whyte eyen,
 And nyuelynge with the nose · and his nekke hangynge.
 'I am Wrath,' quod he · 'I was sum tyme a frere, 136
 And the couentes gardyner · for to graffe ympes;
 On limitoures and listres · lesynges I ymped,
 Tyl thei bere leues of low speche · lordes to plese,
 And sithen thei blosmed obrode · in boure to here shriftes. 140
 And now is fallen ther-of a frute · that folke han wel leuere
 Schewen her schriftes to hem · than shryue hem to her persones.

And now persones han parceyued · that freres parte with hem,
 Thise possessioneres preche · and deprauē freres, 144
 And freres fyndeth hem in defaute · as folke bereth witnes,
 That whan thei preche the poeple · in many place aboute,
 I, Wrath, walke with hem · and wisse hem of my bokes.
 Thus thei speken of spiritualte · that eyther despiseth other, 148
 Til thei be bothe beggers · and by my spiritualte libben,
 Or elles alle riche · and riden aboute.
 I, Wrath, rest neuere · that I ne moste folwe
 This wykked folke · for suche is my grace. 152

I haue an aunte to nonne · and an abbessē bothe,
 Hir were leuere swowe or swelte · than soeffre any peyne.

[*Not in A-text.*]

Whanne he solde and ich noght · thenne was ich a-redy
 To lye and to loury · and to lacke myn neghebores,
 Here werkes, here wordes · wher-so ich sete.
 Now hit a-thynketh me in thought · that euere ich so wrouhte;
 Lord, er ich lyf lete · for loue of thy-selue, 101
 Graunte me, goode lorde · grace of amendement.'

CONFESSIO IRE.

Thenne a-waked Wratthe · with to white eyen,
 With a nyuylynge nose · nyppying hus lyppes. 104
 'Ich am Wratthe,' quath that wye · 'wol gladliche smyte
 Bothe with ston and with staf · and stele vp-on myn enemy;
 For to slee hym slehliche · slehthes ich by-thenke.
 Thauh ich sytte thys seuen ȝer · ich sholde nat wel telle 108
 The harme that ich haue idon · with hand and with tonge.
 Vnpacient in alle penaunces · and pleyned, as hit were,
 On god, whenne me greued ouht · and grucched of hus sonde,
 As, som tyme in somer · and al-so in heruest, 112
 Bote ich hadde wedir at my wil · ich wited god the cause,
 In alle manere angres · that ich hadde other felede.
 A-monges alle manere men · my dwelling ys som tyme,
 With lered and with lewede · that leef ben to hure 116
 Harm of eny man · by-hynde other by-fore.
 Freres folowen my vore · fele tyme and ofte,
 And prouen vnparfit · prelates of holy churche;
 And prelates pleynen of hem · for thei here parshenes shryuen
 With-oute lycence and leue · and herby lyueth wratthe. 121
 Thus thei speke and dispute · that eche dispiseth other.
 Thus beggers and barouns · at debat aren ofte,
 Til ich, Wratth, waxe an hyh · and walke with hem bothe; 124
 Other til bothe be beggers · and by spiritualte lybben,
 Or alle riche thus ride · rest shal ich nauht, Wratthe,
 That ich ne mot folwy this folk · my fortune ys non other.
 Ich haue an aunte to a nunne · and to an abbodesse; 128
 Hem were leuere swouny other swelte · than suffry eny peyne.

IES; grucche P. 114. In IMFSG; And P. 116. leef FS; lef E; luf P.
 118. folowen E; folewen M; solwen I; flowen P. 129. sounye (*for* swouny) P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

I haue be cook in hir kichyne · and the couent serued
 Many monthes with hem · and with monkes bothe. 156
 I was the priouresses potagere · and other poure ladyes,
 And made hem ioutes of iangelynge · that dame Iohanne was
 a bastard,
 And dame Clarice a kniztes douzter · ac a kokewolde was hire
 syre,
 And dame Peronelle a prestes file · priouresse worth she
 neuere, 160
 For she had childe in chirityme · al owre chapitere it wiste.

Of wykked wordes I, Wrath · here wortes i-made,
 Til 'thow lixte' and 'thow lixte' · lopen oute at ones,
 And eyther hitte other · vnder the cheke; 164
 Hadde thei had knyues, bi Cryst · her eyther had killed other.
 Seynt Gregorie was a gode pope · and had a gode forwit,
 That no priouresse were prest · for that he ordeigned.
 Thei had thanne ben *infamis* the firste day · thei can so yuel
 hele conseilte. 168

Amonge monkes I miȝte be · ac many tyme I shonye;
 For there ben many felle frekis · my feres to aspye,
 Bothe prioure an supprioure · and owre *pater abbas*;
 And if I telle any tales · thei taken hem togyderes, 172
 And do me faste Frydayes · to bred and to water,
 And am chalanged in the chapitelhous · as I a childe were,
 And baleised on the bare ers · and no breche bitwene;
 For-thi haue I no lykyng · with tho leodes to wonye. 176
 I ete there vnthende fisshe · and fieble ale drynke;
 Ac other while, whan wyn cometh · whan I drynke wyn at eue,

I haue a fluxe of a foule mouthe · wel fyue dayes after.

[*Not in A-text.*]

Ich haue be cook in here kychene · and the couent serued
 Meny monthes with hem · and with monkes bothe.
 Ich was the prioressse potager · and other poure ladies, 132
 And made here ioutes of iangles; · ‘dame Iohane was a bastarde,
 And dame Clarice a knyghtes douhter · a cokewold was hure
 syre,
 Dame Purnele a prestes file · prioressse worth hue neuere;
 For hue hadde a childe in the chapon-cote · hue worth chalenged
 at eleccion.’ 136
 Thus thei sitte, tho sustres · som tyme, and disputen,
 Til ‘thow lixt’ and ‘thow lixt’ · be lady ouer hem alle;
 And thenne a-wake ich, Wratthe · and wold be auenged.
 Thanne ich crie and cracche · with my kene nailes, 140
 Bothe byte and bete · and brynge forth suche thewes,
 That alle ladies me lothen · that louen eny worschep.
 Among wyues and wodewes · ich am ywoned sitte
 Yparroked in puwes; · the person hit knoweth 144
 How lytel ic louye · Letice at the style;
 For hue hadde haly bred er ich · myn herte by-gan to chaunge.
 After-ward after mete · hue and ich chidde,
 And ich, Wrattth, was war · and wroth on hem both, 148
 Til aither cleped othere ‘hore’ · and of with the clothes,
 Til bothe here heuedes were bar · and bloody here chekes.
 A-mong monkes myght ich be · ac meny tyme ich spare,
 For ther beth meny felle frekus · myne afferes to aspye; 152
 That ys, the priour and the suppriour · and oure *pater abbas*.
 And yf ich telle eny tales · thei taken hem to-geders,
 And don me faste Fridaies · to bred and to water.
 3ut am ich chalenged in chapitele-hous · as ich a childe were,
 And baleysed on the bar ers · and no breche bytwyne. 157
 Ich haue no lust, leyue me · to lenge a-mong monkes;
 For hij eteth more fisch than flesh · and feble ale drynken.
 Ac other-while whanne wyn cometh · and whenne ich drynke
 late, 160
 Ich haue a flux of a foul mouth · wel fyf dayes after.

cleped—hore IMFSG; cliped opere P.
 drenken P; see l. 166.

157. in (*for on*) P.

159.

[*Not in A-text.*]

Al the wikkednesse that I wote · bi any of owre bretheren 180
I couth it in owre cloistre · that al owre couent wote it.'

'Now repent the,' quod Repentaunce · 'and reherce thow
neure

Conseille that thow cnowest · bi contenaunce ne bi riȝte;
And drynke nouȝte ouer delicatly · ne to depe noyther, 184
That thi wille bi cause ther-of · to wrath myȝte torne.

Esto sobrius, he seyde · and assoilled me after,
And bad me wilne to wepe · my wikkednesse to amende.

From [Thanne Lecchoure seyde 'allas!' · and on owre lady he cryed,
B. v. To make mercy for his mis-dedes · bitwene god and his soule,
72-75 With that he shulde the Saterdag · seuene ȝere there-after,
(P. 134). Drynke but myd the doke · and dyne but ones.]

From [With lykyng of lecherye · as by lokyng of his eye.
B. xiii. For vche a mayde that he mette · he made hir a signe
344-352. Semyng to synne-ward · and some tyme he gan taste
About the mouth, or bynethe · begynneth to grope, 347
Tyl eytheres wille waxeth kene · and to the werke ȝeden,
As wel in fastyng-days and frydayes · and forboden nyȝtes;
And as wel in Lente as oute of Lente · alle tymes ylyche,
Suche werkes with hem · were neuer oute of sesoun; 351
Tyl thei myȝte namore · and thanne had merye tales.]

[Compare A. V. 54-58; p. 134.]

Al that ich wiste wickede · by eny of oure couent, 162
 Ich cowede hit vp in oure cloistre · that al the couent wot hit.
 ‘Now repente the,’ quath Repentaunce · ‘and reherce neuere
 What counsail that thow knowest · by contenaunce ne by speche.
 And drynk nat ouer delicatliche · ne to depe neither, 166
 That thy wil ne thy wit · to wratthe myghte turne.
Esto sobrius,’ he seide · and a-soiled hym after,
 And bad hym bidde to god · be hus help to amende. 169

CONFESSIO LUXURIE.

Thenne seide Lecherie ‘alas!’ · and to oure lady cryede,
 ‘Lady, to thy leue sone · lowte for me nouthe,
 That he haue pyte on me putour · of hus pure grace and
 mercy, 172
 With that ich shal,’ quath that shrewe · ‘Saterdayes, for thy loue,
 Drynke bote with the douke · and dyne bote ones.
 Ich, gulty in gost · to god ich me shryue
 As in lykyng of lecherie · my licames gultes, 176
 In wordes, in wedes · in waityng of eyen.
 To eche maide that ich mette · ich made hure a sygne
 Semyng to synne-warde · and somme gan ich taste
 A-boute the mouthe, and by-nythe · by-gan ich to grope, 180
 Til oure bothers wil was on; · to werke we ȝeden
 As wel fastyngdaies as Frydaies · and heye-feste euenes,
 As luf in lente as oute of lente · alle tymes liche—
 Suche werkus with ous · were neuere out of seson— 184
 Til we myghte no more; · thanne hadde we murye tales
 Of puterie and of paramours · and proueden thorw speches,
 Handlyng and halsyng · and al-so thorw cussyng
 Excityng oure aither other · til oure olde synne; 188
 Sotilede songes · and sende out olde baudes
 For to wyne to my wil · wommen with gyle;
 By sorcerye som tyme · and som tyme by maistrye.
 Ich lay by the louelokeste · and loued hem neuere after. 192
 Whenne ich was old and hor · and hadde lore that kynde,
 Ich had lykyng to lauhe · of lecherous tales.
 Now, lord, for thy leaute · of lechours haue mercy!’

Thenne com Couetyse · I couthe him not discreue,
 So hungri and so holewe · sire Herui him loked. 108
 He was bitel-brouwed · with twei blered eizen,
 And lyk a letherne pors · lullede his chekes;
 In a toren tabart · of twelue wynter age;
 But ȝif a lous couthe lepe · I con hit not i-leue 112
 Heo scholde wandre on that walk · hit was so thred-bare.
 'Ichaue ben couetous,' quod this caityf · 'I beknowe hit heere;
 For sum tyme I seruede · Simme atte noke,

AUARICIA.

And thanne cam Coueytise · can I hym nouȝte descryue 188
 So hungiriliche and holwe · sire Heruy hym loked.
 He was bitelbrowed · and baberlipped also,
 With two blered eyghen · as a blynde hagge;
 And as a letheren purs · lolled his chekes, 192
 Wel sydder than his chyn · thei chiueled for elde;
 And as a bondman of his bacoun · his berde was bidraueled.
 With an hode on his hed · a lousi hatte aboue,
 And in a tauny tabarde · of twelue wynter age, 196
 Al totorne and baudy · and ful of lys crepynge;
 But if that a lous couthe · haue lopen the bettre,
 She sholde nouȝte haue walked on that welche · so was it
 thredebare.
 'I haue ben coueytouse,' quod this caityue · 'I biknowe it
 here; 200
 For some tyme I serued · Symme atte stile,
 And was his prentis yplizte · his profit to wayte.
 First I lerned to lye · a leef other tweyne,
 Wikkedlich to weye · was my furst lessoun. 204
 To Wy and to Wynchestre · I went to the faire,
 With many manere marchandise · as my maistre me hizte;
 Ne had the grace of gyle · ygo amonge my ware,
 It had be vnsolde this seuene ȝere · so me god helpe! 208
 Thanne drowe I me amonges draperes · my donet to lerne,
 To drawe the lyser alonge · the lenger it semed;
 Amonge the riche rayes · I rendred a lessoun,

And was his pliht prentys · his profyt to loke. 116

Furst I leornede to lyze · a lessun or tweyne,
 And wikkedliche for to weie · was myn other lessun.
 To Winchestre and to Wych · ich wente to the feire
 With mony maner marchaundise · as my mayster hihte; 120
 Bote nedde the grace of gyle · i-gon a-mong my ware,
 Hit hedde ben vn-sold this seuen 3er · so me god helpe!

Thenne I drou3 me a-mong this drapers · my donet to leorne,
 To drawe the lyste wel along · the lengore hit semede; 124
 Among this riche rayes · lernde I a lessun,

CONFESSIO AUARICIE.

Thenne can Couetyse · ich can nat hym discryue, 196
 So hungerliche and so holwe · Heruy hym-self lokede.
 He was bytelbrowed and baberlupped · with two blery eyen,
 And as a letherene pors · lollid hus chekus,
 Wel sydder than hys chyn · ychiueled for elde: 200
 As bondemenne bacon · hus berd was yshaue,
 With hus hod on his heued · and hus hatte bothe;
 In a toren tabarde · of twelue wynter age;

But 3if a lous couthe lepe · I leue hit, as y trowe, 204
 He scholde not wandre on that welch · so was hit threde-bare.

‘Ich haue be coueitous,’ quath this caityf · ‘ich byknow hit
 here.

For som tyme ich serued · Symme at the style,
 And was his prentys yplyght · hus profyt to waite. 208
 Furst ich lerned to lye · a lesyng other tweye;
 Wickedliche to weye · was my furst lesson.
 To Wy and to Winchestre · ich wente to the faire
 With many maner marchandises · as my maister heghte; 212
 Ne hadde the grace of gyle · gon among my ware,
 Hit hadde ben vnsold thys seuen 3er · so me god helpe!

Ich drow me among drapers · my donet to lerne,
 To drawe the lisure a-longe · the lenger it semed; 216
 Among the riche rayes · ich rendered a lesson,

IMFSEG; Al P. 204, 205. *These lines are from SIMFG; P. om.* 212.
 P om. maner. maister MIFSEG; maistres P.

Brochede hem with a pak-neelde · and pletede hem togedere,
 Putte hem in a pressour · and pinnede hem ther-inne
 Til ten ȝerdes other twelue · tolden out threttene. 128

And my wyf at Westmunstre · that wollene cloth made,
 Spak to the spinsters · for to spinne hit softe.
 The pound that heo peysede by · peisede a quartrun more
 Then myn auncel dude · whon I weyede treuthe. 132

I bouhte hire barly · heo breuh hit to sulle;
 Peni-ale and piriwhit · heo pourede to-gedere
 For laborers and louh folk · that liuen be hem-seluen.

To broche hem with a pak-nedle · and plaited hem togyderes,
 And put hem in a presse · and pynned hem therinne, 213
 Tyl ten ȝerdes or twelue · hadde tolled out threttene.

My wyf was a webbe · and wollen cloth made;
 She spak to spynnesteres · to spynnen it oute. 216
 Ac the pounde that she payed by · poised a quarteroun more
 Than myne owne auncere · who-so weyȝed treuthe.

I bouȝte hir barly-malte · she brewe it to selle,
 Peny-ale and podyng-ale · she poured togideres 220
 For laborers and for low folke; · that lay by hym-selue.

The best ale lay in my boure · or in my bedchambre,
 And who-so bummed ther-of · bouȝte it ther-after,
 A galoun for a grote · god wote, no lesse; 224
 And ȝit it cam in cupmel · this crafte my wyf vsed.
 Rose the regratere · was hir riȝte name;
 She hath holden hokkerye · al hire lyf-tyme.

Ac I swere now, so the ik · that synne wil I lete, 228
 And neuere wikkedliche weye · ne wikke chaffare vse,
 But wenden to Walsyngham · and my wyf als,
 And bidde the rode of Bromeholme · brynge me oute of dette.'

'Repentestedow the euere,' quod Repentance · 'ne restitucioun
 madest?'

'ȝus, ones I was herberwed,' quod he · 'with an hep of
 chapmen,

I roos whan thei were arest · and yrifled here males.'

A. 131. by TU; VH *om.*
 pak-nedle WCO; bat-nedle L.
 214. hadde WOC; L *om.*

142. sothely HTU; V *om.*

213. pynned C; pynnede O; pyned L.

224. na L.

232. Repentestedow W;

B. 212.

The beste in the bed-chaumbre · lay bi the wowe, 136
Hose bummede therof · bouzte hit ther-after,
A galoun for a grote · god wot, no lasse,
Whon hit com in cuppemel; · such craftes me vsede.
Rose the regratour · is hire rihte name; 140
Heo hath holden hoxterye · this elleuene wynter.

Bote I swere nou sothely · that sunne wol I lete,
And neuere wikkedliche weye · ne fals chaffare vsen,
Bote weende to Walsyngham · and my wyf also, 144
And bidde the rode of Bromholm · bringe me out of dette.'

To brochen hem with a batte-nelde · and bond hem togederes;
Ich putte hem in pressours · and pynned hem therynne,
Tyl ten ȝerdes other twelue · tilled out threttyne. 210

My wif was a webbe · and wollen cloth made;
Hue spak to the spynnesters · to spynnen hit oute.
The pound that hue paiede hem by · peysed a quarter
More than myn auncel · whenne ich weied treuthe. 224

Ich bouhte hure barliche · hue brew hit to selle,
Peny-ale and podyng-ale · hue pourede to-geders,
For laborers and lowe folke · that laye by hem-selue.

The beste laye in my bour · and in my bed-chambre, 228
And who so bommede ther-of · he bouht yt ther-after,
A galon for a grote · and ȝut no grayth mesure,
Whanne it cam in coppe-mel; · this craft my wif vsede.
Rose the regratour · was hure ryght name; 232
Hue hath yholde hockerye · this eleuene wynter.'

'Repentest thou neuere?' quath Repentaunce · 'ne restitucion
madest?'

'Ȝus, ones,' quath he, 'ich was yherborwed · with an hep of
chapmen;
Ich a-ros and rifled here males · whenne thei a reste were.' 236

[*Not in A-text.*]

‘That was no restitucioun,’ quod Repentance · ‘but a robberes thefte,

Thow haddest be better worthy · be hanged therfore 236
Than for al that · that thow hast here shewed.’

‘I wende ryflynge were restitucioun,’ quod he · ‘for I lerned neuere rede on boke,
And I can no Frenche in feith · but of the ferthest ende of Norfolke.’

‘Vsedestow euere vsurie,’ quod Repentaunce · ‘in alle thi lyf-tyme?’ 240

‘Nay, sothly,’ he seyde · ‘saue in my ȝouth.
I lerned amonge Lumbardes · and Iewes a lessoun,
To wey pens with a peys · and pare the heuyest,
And lene it for loue of the crosse · to legge a wedde and lese it; 244

Suche dedes I did wryte · ȝif he his day breke.
I haue mo maneres thorw rerages · than thorw *miseretur ei comodat.*

I haue lent lordes · and ladyes my chaffare,
And ben her brocour after · and bouȝte it my-self. 248
Eschaunges and cheuesances · with suche chaffare I dele,
And lene folke that lese wol · a lyppe at euery noble.
And with Lumbardes lettres · I ladde golde to Rome,
And toke it by taille here · and tolde hem there lasse.’ 252

‘Lentestow euere lordes · for loue of her mayntenaunce?’

‘ȝe, I haue lent lordes · loued me neuere after,
And haue ymade many a knyȝte · bothe mercere and drapere,
That payed neuere for his prentishode · nouȝte a peire gloues.’ 256

‘Hastow pite on pore men · that mote nedes borwe?’

‘I haue as moche pite of pore men · as pedlere hath of cates,
That wolde kille hem, yf he cacche hem myȝte · for coueitise of here skynnes.’

‘Artow manlyche amonge thi neiȝbores · of thi mete and drynke?’ 260

‘I am holden,’ quod he, ‘as hende · as hounde is in kychyne,
Amonges my neighbors, namelich · such a name ich haue.’

[*Not in A-text.*]

‘That was a reufol restitucion’ · quath Repentaunce, ‘for sothe;
Thow wolt hongy heye ther-fore · her other in helle!

Vsedest thow euere vserie · in al thy lyf-tyme?’

‘Nay, sothliche,’ he sayde · ‘saf in my ȝouthe. 240
Ich lerned among Lumbardes · a lesson, and of Iewes,
To weie pans with a peis · and pared the heuyeste,
And lente for loue of the wed · the whiche ich let betere,
And more worth than the moneye · other men that ich lenede.

Ich lenede folk that lese wolde · a lippe in eche noble, 245
And with Lombardes letters · ich lenede gold at Rome;
So what bern of me borwed · he bouhte the tyme.’

‘Lenedest thow euere to eny lorde · for loue of menteynaunce?’
‘Ich haue ylent to lordes and to ladies · that louede me neuere
after. 249

Ich haue mad meny a knyght · bote mercer and draper,
Payede neuere for here prentishode · nauht a payre gloues;
That chaffared with my chyuesaunce · cheuede selde after.’ 252

B. 236. L omits the former be. 253. Lentestow; Lenestow L. C. 240.
hue (for he) P. 250. P om. a. 251. payere P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

'Now god leue neure," quod Repentance · 'but thow repent
the rather,
The grace on this grounde · thi good wel to bisette, 264
Ne thine ysue after the · haue Ioye of that thow wynnest,
Ne thi excecutoours wel bisett · the siluer that thow hem leuest;
And that was wonne with wronge · with wikked men be des-
pended.

From
B. xiii.
362-368. [And menged his marchaundyse · and made a good moustre;—
The worste with-in was · a gret witte I lete hit; 363
And if my neighbore had any hyne · or any beste elles
More profitable than myne · many sleighes I made,
How I myȝte haue it · al my witte I caste, 366
And but I it had by other waye · atte laste I stale it,
Or pryuiliche his purse shoke · vnpiked his lokkes.]

From
B. xiii.
371-375. [ȝif I ȝede to the plow · I pynched so narwe,
That a fote-londe or a forwe · fecchen I wolde, 372
Of my nexte neighbore · nymen of his erthe;
And if I rope, ouer-reche · or ȝaf hem red that ropen
To seise to me with her sikel · that I ne sewe neure.]

From
B. xiii.
384-389. [In halydayes at holicherche · whan ich herde masse,
Hadde I neuere wille, wot god · witterly to biseche
Mercye for my mysdedes · that I ne morned more 386
For losse of gode, leue me · than for my lykames giltes;
As, if I had dedly synne done · I dred nouȝt that so sore
As when I lened and leued it lost · or longe ar it were payed.]

From
B. xiii.
392-399. [And if I sent ouer see · my seruauantz to Bruges, 392
Or in-to Pruslonde my prentys · my profit to wayten,
To marchaunden with monoye · and maken her eschaunges,
Miȝte neuere me conforte · in the mene tyme
Noither messe ne matynes · ne none manere sijtes, 396
Ne neuere penaunce perfourned · ne *pater-noster* seyde,
That my mynde ne was more · on my gode, in a doute,
Than in the grace of god · and his grete helps:
Vbi thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum.

[Not in A-text.]

‘Now redelich,’ quath Repentaunce · ‘and by the rode, ich leyue,
Shal neuere executor wel by-sette · the suluer that thow hym
leuest,

Ne thyn ayres, as ich hope · haue ioye of that thow wan.
For the pope and alle hus penetauncers · power hem faylleth,
To a-soyle the of thy synnes · *sine restitutione*; 257

Nunquam dimittitur peccatum, nisi restituatur ablatum.

‘With false wordes and wittes · ich haue wonne my goodes,
And with gyle and glosynge · gadered that ich haue,
Meddled my marchaundise · and mad a good moustre; 260
The werst lay with-ynne · a gret wit ich let hit.

And yf my neyhzebore hadde an hyne · other eny best ellys
More profitable than myn · ich made meny wentes,
How ich myght haue hit · al my wit ich caste. 264

And bote ich hadde hit by other wey · atte laste ich stal hit,
Other pryuyliche hus pors shok · vnpiked hus lokes.
And yf ich zede to the plouh · ich pynchede on hus half-acre,
That a fot-londe other a forwe · fecchen ich wolde, 268
Of my neyhzeboris next · nymen of hus erthe.

And yf y repe, ouere-reche · other 3af hem red that repen
To sese to me with here sykkel : that ich sew neuere.
In halydayes at holy church · whenne ich hurde messe, 272
Ich hadde neuere wil witerlich · to by-seche mercy
For my mysdedes · that ich ne mornede ofter
For lost of good, leyue me · then for lycames gultes.
Thauh ich dedliche synne dude · ich dradde hit nat so sore
As whenne ich lenede and leyuede hit lost · other longe er hit
were paied. 277

And yf ich sente ouer see · my seruaunt to Brugges,
Other in-to Prus my prentys · my profit to a-waite,
To marchaunde with monye · and maken here eschaunge, 280
Myghte neuere man comforty me · in the meyn tyme,
Neither matyns ne masse · ne othere manere syghtes,
And neuere penaunse performede · ne *pater-noster* seyde,
That my mynde ne was · more in my goodes 284
Than in godes grace · and hus grete myghte.

Ubi thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum.

[*Not in A-text.*]

For were I frere of that hous · there gode faith and charite is, 268
 I nolde cope vs with thi catel · ne owre kyrke amende,
 Ne haue a peny to my pitaunce · of thyne, bi my soule hele,
 For the best boke in owre hous · theize brent golde were the
 leues,

And I wyst wytterly · thow were suche as thow tellest, 272
 Or elles that I kouthe knowe it · by any kynnes wise.

Seruius es allerius · cum fercula pinguia queris,

Pane tuo potius · vescere, liber eris.

Thow art an vnkynde creature · I can the nouzte assoille, 276
 Til thow make restitucioun · and rekne with hem alle,
 And sithen that resoun rolle it · in the regystre of heuene,
 That thow hast made vche man good · I may the nouzte assoille;

Non dimittitur peccatum · donec restituatur ablatum, etc.

For alle that haue of thi good · haue god my trouthe! 280
 Ben holden at the heighe dome · to helpe the to restitue.

And who so leueth nouzte this be soth · loke in the sauter glose,
 In *miserere mei deus* · where I mene treuthe,

Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti, etc.

Shal neuere werkman in this worlde · thryue wyth that thow
 wynnest; 284

Cum sancto sanctus eris · construe me that on Engliche.'

Thanne wex that shrewe in wanhope · and walde haue hanged
 him-self,

Ne hadde Repentaunce the rather · reconforted hym in this
 manere,

'Haue mercye in thi mynde · and with thi mouth biseche it, 288
 For goddes mercye is more · than alle hise other werkes;

Misericordia eius super omnia opera eius, etc.

From B. v. 463-466.	[And ȝete wil I ȝelde aȝein · if I so moche haue, Al that I wikkedly wan · sithen I wytte hadde. And though my lifode lakke · leten I nelle That eche man ne shal haue his · ar I hennes wende.]	465
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B. 272. tellest WCRO; telleth L. 273. From C; LWRO omit this line.
 280. For the former haue, as in C, L has hath. 281. Ben WCO; Is L.

[Compare A. V. 236-239.]

‘Now redeliche,’ quath Repentaunce · ‘ich haue reuthe of thy
lyuyngē.

Were ich a frere, in good faith · for al the gold on erthe
Ich nolde cope me with thy catell · ne oure kirke amende, 288
Ne take a meles mete of thyne · and myn herte hit wiste
That thou were such as thou seist; · ich sholde rathere sterue:

Melius est mori quam male uiuere.

Ich rede no faithful frere · at thy feste sytte;
Ȝut were me leuere, by oure lord · lyue by welle-carses 292
Than haue my fode and my fyndynge · of false menne wynnynge:
Seruius es alterius · cum fercula pinguia queris,
Pane tuo potius · uescere, liber eris.

Thow art an vnkynde creature · ich can the nat assoyle 296
Tyl thou haue ymad, by thy myght · to alle men restitution;
For alle that hauen of thy good · (haue god my treuthe!)
Beeth holden at the hye dome · to helpe the restitue.
The preest that thy tythe taketh · trowe ich non other, 300
Shal parte with the in purgatorie · and help paye thy dette,
Yf he wist thou were suche · when he reseuyde thyn offrynge.
What lede leyueh that ich lye · loke in the sauter glosed

On ecce enim ueritatem dilexisti.

Ther he shal wite witerliche · what vsure is to mene, 304
And what penaunce the prest shal haue · that prout is of thi
tythes.

For an hore of hure ers-wynnynge · may hardiloker tythe
Than an erraunt vsurer · (haue god my treuthe!)
And crest shal come to heuene · by Cryst that me made!’ 308

Then was ther a Walishman · was wonderliche sory,
He highte ‘Ȝyuan Ȝeld-Ȝeyn- · if-ich-so-moche-haue,
Al that ich wickeddelich wan · sytthen ich wit hadde;
And thauh my liflode lacke · leten ich nelle, 312
That ech man shal haue hus · er ich hennes wende.
For me ys leuere in this lif · as a lorel beggen,
Than in lysse to lyue · and lese lyf and soule.’

C. 288. kirke IMF; church P. 291. faitthful P. 292. carses EG;
carsus S; cresses I; carse P. 294. *fercucula* P. 296. ert P. 305.
ȝi tiȝus F; his tiȝes MS; ȝe tethes P; *read* ȝi tythes. 311. wit G;
witt E; wyt S; witte I; hit PMF.

[Robert the robbour · on *Reddite* he lokede,
 And for ther nas not wher-with · he wepte ful sore.
 But ȝit the sunfol schrewe · seide to him-seluen : 244
From ‘ Crist, that vppon Caluarie · on the cros diȝedest,
A. v. Tho Dismas my brother · bisonȝte the of grace,
 242-250. And heddest merci of that mon · for *memento* sake,
 Thi wille worth vppon me · as ich haue wel deseruet 248
 To haue helle for euere · ȝif that hope neore.
 So rewe on me, Robert · that no red haue,

[Robert the robbere · on *reddite* lokede, 469
 And for ther was nouȝte wher-of · he wepe swithe sore.
 Ac ȝet the synful schrewe · seyde to hym-selue,
 ‘ Cryst, that on Caluarie · vppon the crosse deydest, 472
 Tho Dismas my brother · bisonȝte ȝow of grace,
 And haddest mercy on that man · for *memento* sake,
From So rewe on this robbere · that *reddere* ne haue,
B. v. Ne neuere wene to wyne · with crafte that I owe. 476
 469-484. But for thi mykel mercy · mitigacioun I biseche;
 Ne dampne me nouȝte at domesday · for that I did so ille.
 What bifel of this feloun · I can nouȝte faire schewe,
 Wel I wote he wepte faste · water with bothe his eyen, 480
 And knowleched his gult · to Cryst ȝete eftsones,
 That *penitencia* his pyke · he schulde polsche newe, . . .
 For he had leyne bi *Latro* · *Luciferes* aunte.] 484

And al the wikkednesse in this worlde · that man myȝte
 worche or thynke,
 Ne is no more to the mercye of god · than in the see a glede;

*Omnis iniquitas quantum ad misericordiam dei, est quasi
 sintilla in medio maris.*

For-thi haue mercy in thi mynde · and marchandise, leue
 it, 292

Ne neuere weene to wyne · for craft that I knowe.
 Bote for thi muchel merci · mitigacion I beseche; 252
 Dampne me not on domes day · for I dude so ille.
 From A. v. Ak what fel of this feloun · I con not feire schewe,
 251-259. But wel ich wot he wepte fast · water with his eijen,
 And knouhlechede his gult · to Crist ȝit eft-sones, 256
 That *Penitencia* is pike · he schulde polissche newe,
 And lepe with him ouerlond · al his lyf-tyme,
 For he hath leijen bi *Latro* · Lucifers brother.]

Roberd the ryfeler · on *reddite* lokede, 316
 And for ther was nat wher-with · he wepte ful sore;
 And ȝut that synful shrewe · seide to heuene,
 ‘Crist, that on Caluarye · on the croys deidest,
 Tho Dismas my brother · by-souhte the of grace, 320
 And haddest mercy on that man · for *memento* sake,
 So rewe on me, Roberd · that *reddere* ne haue,
 Ne neuere wene to wyne · with craft that ich knowe.
 For thy muchel mercy · mytigacion ich by-seche, 324
 Dampne me nouht at domys day · for that ich dude so ille.’
 What by-fel of this felon · ich can nouht faire shewe;
 Wel ich wot he wepte faste · water with hus eyen,
 And to Crist knowlechede · hus coupe ȝut eft-sone, 328
 That penaunce hus pyk-staf · he wolde polische newe,
 For he hadde leye by *Latro* · Lucifers aunte.
 ‘By the rode,’ quath Repentaunce · ‘thow romest toward heuene,
 By so that hit be in thyn herte · as ich hure thy tonge. 332
 Trist in his mochel mercy · and ȝut myght thow be saued.
 For al the wrecchednesse of this worlde · and wicked dedes
 Fareth as a fonk of fuyr · that ful a-myde Temese,
 And deide for a drop of water; · so doth alle synnes 336
 Of alle manere men · that with good wille
 Confessen hem and crien mercy · shullen neuere come in helle.

*Omnis iniquitas quoad misericordiam dei est quasi sintilla
 in medio maris.*

Repente the anon,’ quath Repentaunce · ryȝt so to the vsurer,
 ‘And haue hus mercy in thy mynde · and marchaundise, leue
 hit; 340

Nou ginneth the Gloton · for to go to schrifte,
 And carieth him to chircheward · his schrift forte telle.
 Thenne Betun the breustere · bad him gode morwe, 148
 And seththen heo asked of him · ‘whoder that he wolde?’
 ‘To holi chirche,’ quod he · ‘for to here masse,
 And seththen I-chule ben I-schriuen · and sunge no more.’
 ‘Ic haue good ale, gossib,’ quod heo · ‘Gloten, woltou asaye?’

For thou hast no good grounde · to gete the with a wastel,
 But if it were with thi tonge · or ellis with thi two hondes.
 For the good that thou hast geten · bigan al with falsehede,
 And as longe as thou lyuest ther-with · thou ȝeldest nouȝte, but
 borwest. 296
 And if thou wite neuere to whiche · ne whom to restitue,
 Bere it to the bisschop · and bidde hym of his grace,
 Bisette it hym-selue · as best is for thi soule.
 For he shal answeere for the · at the heygh dome, 300
 For the and for many mo · that man shal ȝif a rekenynge.
 What he lerned ȝow in lente · leue thou none other,
 And what he lent ȝow of owre lordes good · to lette ȝow fro
 synne.’

GULA.

Now bigynneth glotoun · for to go to schrifte, 304
 And kaires hym to-kirke-ward · his coupe to schewe.
 Ac Beton the brewestere · bad hym good morwe,
 And axed of hym with that · whiderward he wolde.
 ‘To holi cherche,’ quod he · ‘forto here masse, 308
 And sithen I wil be shryuen · and synne namore.’
 ‘I haue gode ale, gossib,’ quod she · ‘Glotoun, wiltow assaye?’
 ‘Hastow auȝte in thi purs · any hote spices?’
 ‘I haue peper and piones,’ quod she · ‘and a pounde of
 garlike, 312
 A ferthyngworth of fenel-seed · for fastyngdayes.’
 Thanne goth Glotoun in · and grete othes after;
 Cesse the souteresse · sat on the benche,
 Watte the warner · and his wyf bothe, 316
 Tymme the tynkere · and tweyne of his prentis,

‘Hastou ouzt i thi pors,’ quod he · ‘eny hote spices?’
 ‘Ȝe, Gloton, gossip,’ quod heo · ‘god wot, ful goode;
 I haue peper and plane · and a pound of garlek,
 A ferthing-worth of fenel-seed · for this fastyng dayes.’ 156
 Thene geth Gloton in · and grete othus after;
 Sesse the souters wyf · sat on the benche,
 Watte the warinar · and his wyf bothe,
 Tomkyn the tinkere · and tweyne of his knaues, 160

For thou hast no good, by good faith! · to bygge the with a wastell.
 The good that thou hauest ygete · by-gan al with falshede;
 As longe as thou lyest ther-with · thou ȝeldest nat, bote borw-
 est.
 And yf thou wite neuere to wham · ne where to restitue, 344
 Bere hit to the bischop · and bid hym of hus grace,
 To by-setten hit hym-selue · as best be for thy soule;
 For he shal answeere for the · at the hye dome,
 For the and for meny mo · that man shal ȝeue rekenynge, 348
 What he lerede ȝow to lyue with · and to lette ȝow fro thufthe.’

CONFESSIO GULE.

Now by-gynneth Gloton · for to go to shryfte,
 And kayres hym to-kirke-ward · hus coupe to shewe.
 Fastyng on a Fryday · forth gan he wende 352
 By Betone hous the brewestere · that bad hym good morwe,
 And whederwarde he wolde · the brew-wif hym asked.
 ‘To holy church,’ quath he · ‘for to hure masse,
 And sitthen sitte and be yshriuen · and synwe namore.’ 356
 ‘Ich haue good ale, godsyb · Gloton, wolt thou assaye?’
 ‘What hauest thou,’ quath he · ‘eny hote spices?’
 ‘Ich haue piper and pionys · and a pound of garlik,
 A ferthyng-worth of fynkelsede · for fastinge-daies.’ 360
 Thenne goth Gloton yn · and grete othes after.
 Sesse the sywestere · sat on the benche,
 Watte the warynere · and hus wif dronke,
 Thomme the tynkere · and tweye of hus knaues, 364

Hikke the hakeney mon · and Hogge the neldere,
 Clarisse of Cokkes lone · and the clerk of the churchē,
 Sire Pers of Pridye · and Pernel of Flaundres,
 Dauwe the disschere · and a doseyn othere. 164

A ribibor, a ratoner · a rakere of Chepe,
 A ropere, a redyng-kyng · and Rose the disschere,
 Godfrei of Garlesschire · and Griffin the Walsche,
 And of vp-holders an hep · erly bi the morwe 168
 ȝine the Gloton with good wille · good ale to honsel.

Thenne Clement the cobelere · caste of his cloke,
 And atte newe feire · he leyde hire to sulle;
 And Hikke the ostiler · hutte his hod aftur, 172

Hikke the hakeneyman · and Hughe the nedeler,
 Clarice of Cokkeslane · and the clerke of the cherche,
 Dawe the dykere · and a dozeine other; 320

Sire Piers of Pridie · and Peronelle of Flaundres,
 A ribibour, a ratonere · a raker of Chepe,
 A ropere, a redyngkyng · and Rose the dissheres,
 Godfrey of Garlekehithe · and Gryfin the Walshe, 324
 And vpholderes an hepe · erly bi the morwe
 Geuen glotoun with glad chere · good ale to hansel.

Clement the cobelere · cast of his cloke,
 And atte new faire · he nempned it to selle; 328
 Hikke the hakeneyman · hitte his hood after,
 And badde Bette the bochere · ben on his side.
 There were chapmen y-chose · this chaffare to preise;
 Who-so haueth the hood · shuld haue amendes of the cloke. 332

Two risen vp in rape · and rouned togideres,
 And preised these penyworthes · apart bi hem-selue;
 Thei couth nouȝte bi her conscience · acorden in treuthe,
 Tyl Robyn the ropere · arose bi the southe, 336
 And nempned hym for a noumpere · that no debate nere,
 For to trye this chaffare · bitwixen hem thre.

Hikke the hostellere · hadde the cloke,

And bad Bette the bocher · ben on his bi-syde.
 Ther weore chapmen i-chose · the chaffare to preise;
 Hose hedde the hod · schulde haue amendes.
 Thei risen vp raply · and rouneden to-gedere, 176
 And preiseden the peniworthus · and parteden bi hemseluen;
 Ther weoren othes an hep · hose that hit herde.
 Thei couthe not bi heore concience · a-corde to-gedere,
 Til Robyn the ropere · weore rad forte a-ryse, 180
 And nempned for a noumpere · that no de-bat neore,
 For he schulde preise the penyworthes · as hym good thouȝt.
 Thenne Hikke the ostiler · hedde the cloke,

Hicke the hakeneyman · and Houwe the neldere,
 Claryce of Cockeslane · the clerk of the churche,
 Syre Peeres of Prydie · and Purnel of Flaundres,
 An haywarde and an heremyte · the hangeman of Tyborne, 368
 Dauwe the dykere · with a dosen harlotes
 Of portours and of pykeporses · and pylede toth-drawers,
 A rybibour and a ratoner · a rakere and hus knaue,
 A ropere and a redyngkyng · and Rose the disshere, 372
 Godefray the garlek-mongere · and Griffyn the Walish;
 And of vp-holders an hep · erly by the morwe
 Geuen Gloton with glad chere · good ale to hansele.
 Clemment the cobelere · cast of hus cloke, 376
 And to the newe fayre · nempned hit to selle.
 Hicke the hakeneyman · hitte hus hod after,
 And bad Bette the bouchere · to be on hus syde.
 Ther were chapmen y-chose · the chaffare to preise; 380
 That he that hadde the hod · sholde nat habbe the cloke;
 The betere thyng, by arbytours · sholde bote the werse.
 Two rysen rapliche · and rounede to-geders,
 And preysed the penyworthes · apart by hem-selue, 384
 And ther were othes an hepe · for other sholde haue the werse.
 Thei couthe nouht by here conscience · a-corde for treuthe,
 Tyl Robyn the ropere · aryse thei bysouhte,
 And nempned hym a nompeyr · that no debate were. 388
 Hicke the hakeneyman · hadde the cloke,

B. 338. *From OC; L omits this line.*

C. 365. P *om.* þe after Hicke.

370. pykeporeses P. 375. chire P. 377. nywe P. 379. þe IMFSE; P *om.*

In couenaunt that Clement · schulde the cuppe fulle, 184
 And habbe Hikkes hod the ostiler · and hold him wel iseruet;
 And he that repenteth rathest · schulde aysen aftur,
 And greten sir Gloten · with a galun of ale.

Ther was lau3whing and lotering · and 'let go the cuppe;' 189
 Bargeyns and beuerages · bi-gonne to aryse,
 And seeten so til euensong · and songen sum while,
 Til Gloten hedde i-gloupet · a galoun and a gille.
 He pissede a potel · in a *pater-noster*-while, 192
 And bleuh the ronde ruwet · atte rugge-bones ende,
 That alle that herde the horn · heolden heore neose after,

In couenaunte that Clement · shulde the cuppe fille, 340
 And haue Hikkes hode hostellere · and holde hym yserued;
 And who-so repented rathest · shulde arise after,
 And grete sire Glotoun · with a galoun ale.

There was laughyng and louryng · and 'let go the cuppe,' 344
 And seten so til euensonge · and songen vmwhile,
 Tyl Glotoun had y-globbed · a galoun an a Lille.
 His guttis gunne to gothely · as two gredy sowes;
 He pissed a potel · in a *pater-noster*-while, 348
 And blew his rounde ruwet · at his rigge-bon ende,
 That alle that herde that horne · held her nose after,
 And wissheden it had be wexed · with a wispe of firse.

He myzte neither steppe ne stonde · er he his staffe hadde; 352
 And thanne gan he go · liche a glewmannes bicche,
 Somme tyme aside · and somme tyme arrere,
 As who-so leyth lynes · forto lacche foules.

And whan he drowgh to the dore · thanne dymmed his 356
 eighen,
 He stumbled on the thresshewolde · an threwe to the erthe.
 Clement the cobelere · cau3te hym bi the myddel,
 For to lifte hym alofte · and leyde him on his knowes;
 Ac Glotoun was a gret cherle · and a grym in the lifynge, 360
 And coughed vp a caudel · in Clementis lappe;

A. 199. lacche TU; cacche VH. 202-207. *These lines are in U only.*
 B. 347. gothely C; gotheli O; gothelen W; godly L. 357. stumbled
 WCO; trembled L. C. 400. rywett P. atte þe P. 401. þat G; þan P;
 þe IMFE; his S. 402. þat hit hadde P. 403. stonde P. 404. hue

And weschte that hit weore i-wipet · with a wesp of firsen.

He hedde no strengthe to stonde · til he his staf hedde; 196
Thenne gon he for to go · lyk a gleo-monnes bicche,
Sum tyme asyde · and sum tyme arere,
As hose leith lynes · to lacche with foules.

Whon he drouh to the dore · then dimmede his eizen, 200
He thrompelde atte threxwolde · and threuh to the grounde.
Clement the coblere · cauhte Glotoun by the mydle,
And for to lyfte hym aloft · leide hym on his knees;
And Glotoun was a gret cherl · and grym in the lyftyng, 204
And cowhede vp a cawdel · in Clementis lappe,

In couenaunt that Clemment · sholde the coppe fylle,
And haue the hakeneymannes hod · and hold hym y-serued;
And who repentyde rathest · shold aryse after, 392
And grete syre Gloton · with a galon of ale.

Ther was lauhying & lakeryng · and 'let go the coppe!'
Bargeynes and beuereges · by-gunne to aryse,
And setyn so til euesong rang · and songe vmbwhyte, 396
Til Gloton hadde yglobbed · a galon and a gylle.
Hus guttes gonne godely · as two gredy sowes;
He pissede a potell · in a *pater-noster*-while,
And blew hus rounde rewet · atte rygbones ende, 400
That alle that herde that horne · hulde here nose after,
And wusched hit hadde be wexed · with a wips of breres.

He myghte nother stappe ne stonde · tyl he a staf hadde.
Thanne gan he go · lyke a glemannes bycche, 404
Som tyme asyde · and som tyme a-rere,
As ho so laith lynes · for to lacche foules.

And whenne he drow to the dore · thanne dymmed hus eyen;
He thrumbled at the threshfold · and threw to the erthe. 408
Tho Clement the cobelere · cauhte hym by the mydel,
For to lyfte hym on loft · he leyde hym on hus knees;
Ac Gloton was a gret cherl · and gronyd in the lifyng,
And couhed vp a caudel · in Clementes lappe; 412

(for he) P. 405. P om. and. 408. thrumbled I; thromlide G; stomblede PE. þrew SIF; þreu P. 410. leyde I; leide MFG; ledde PES. 411. in IMSG; on P.

That the hungriest hound · of Hertforde schire
 Ne durst lape of that laueyne · so vnloveli it smakith.
 That with al the wo of this world · his wyf and his wenche 208
 Beeren him hom to his bed · and brouhten him ther-inne.
 And after al this surfet · an accesse he hedde,

Is non so hungri hounde · in Hertford schire
 Durst lape of the leuynges · so vniouely thei smaũzte.

With al the wo of this worlde · his wyf and his wenche 364
 Baren hym home to his bedde · and brouzte hym therinne.
 And after al this excesse · he had an accidie,
 That he slepe Saterdag and Sonday · til sonne ȝede to reste.
 Thanne waked he of his wynkyng · and wiped his eyghen; 368
 The fyrste worde that he warpe · was, 'where is the bolle?'
 His wif gan edwite hym tho · how wikkedlich he lyued,

And Repentance rizte so · rebuked hym that tyme: 371
 'As thow with wordes and werkes · hast wrouzte yuel in thi lyue,
 Shryue the and be shamed ther-of · and shewe it with thi
 mouth.'

'I, Glotoun,' quod the gome · 'gylti me ȝelde,
 That I haue trespassed with my tonge · I can nouzte telle how
 ofte,
 Sworen 'goddess soule' · and 'so god me help and halidom,' 376
 There no nede ne was · nyne hundreth tymes;
 And ouer-seye me at my sopere · and some tyme at nones,

From
B. xiii. [And more mete ete and dronke · then kende miȝt defie,]
 404.

That I Glotoun girt it vp · er I hadde gone a myle,
 And y-spilte that myȝte be spared · and spended on somme
 hungrie; 380

That he slepte Seturday and Sonenday · til sonne wente to reste.
 Thenne he wakede of his wynk · and wypede his eizen; 212
 The furste word that he spac was · 'wher is the cuppe?'
 His wyf warnede him tho · of wikkednesse and of sinne.
 Thenne was he a-schomed, that schrewe · and schraped his eren,

Ys non so hongry hounde · in Hertforde-shire,
 That thorst lape of that leuyng · so vnloueliche hit smauhte.
 With al the wo of the worlde · hus wif and hus wenche
 Bere hym to hus bedde · and brouhte hym ther-ynne; 416
 And after al this excesse · he hadde an accidie,
 He slep Saterdag and Sonday · tyl sonne ȝede to reste.
 Thenne awakyde he wel wan · and wolde haue ydronke;
 The ferst word that he spak · was 'ho halt the bolle?' 420
 Hus wif and hys inwit · edwited hym of hus synne;
 He wax a-shamed, that shrewe · and shrof hym al-so swithe
 To Repentaunce ryȝt thus; · 'haue reuthe on me,' he seyde,
 'Thow lord that on loft art · and alle lyues shope! 424
 To the, god, ich Gloton · gulty me ȝelde
 Of my trespas with tunge · ich can nauht telle how ofte,
 Sworen 'thy saule and thy sydes' · and 'so help me, god
 almyghty!'
 When that no ned was · meny tyme falsliche. 428
 And ouer-sopede at my soper · and som tyme at nones

More than my kynde · myghte wel defye;
 And as an hounde that et gras · so gan ich to brake,
 And spilde that ich spele myghte · ich can nouht speke for
 shame 432
 The vlenye of my foule mouthe · and of my foule mawe.

and) P. 425. gulty ich me P. 427. P om. 2nd by. 428. ned MS; nede
 IFE; nud P. 431. etc P. 432. spele IFS; spelide P.

And gon to grede grimliche · and gret deol to make 216
 For his wikkede lyf · that he i-liued hedde.

‘For hungur other for furst · I make myn a-vou,

Ouerdelicaty on fastyng-dayes · drunken and eten bothe,
 And sat some tyme so longe there · that I slepe and ete at ones.
 For loue of tales in tauernes · to drynke the more, I dyned,
 And hyed to the mete er none · whan fastyng-dayes were.’ 384

‘This shewyng shrifte,’ quod Repentance · ‘shal be meryte
 to the.’

And thanne gan Glotoun grete · and gret doel to make
 For his lither lyf · that he lyued hadde,
 And avowed to fast— · ‘for hunger or for thirst 388
 Shal neuere fisshe on the Fryday · defien in my wombe,
 Tyl Abstinence myn aunte · haue ȝiue me leue;
 And ȝit haue I hated hir · al my lyf-tyme.’

ACCIDIA.

Thanne come Sleuthe al bislabered · with two slymy eizen : 392
 ‘I most sitte,’ seyde the segge · ‘or elles shulde I nappe ;
 I may nouȝte stonde ne stoupe · ne with-oute a stole knele.
 Were I brouȝte abedde · but if my taille-ende it made,
 Sholde no ryngynge do me ryse · ar I were rype to dyne.’ 396
 He bygan *benedicite* with a bolke · and his brest knocked,
 And roxed and rored · and rutte atte laste.
 ‘What! awake, renke!’ quod Repentance · ‘and rape the to
 shrifte.’

‘If I shulde deye bi this day · me liste nouȝte to loke ; 400
 I can nouȝte perfily my *pater-noster* · as the prest it syngeth,
 But I can rymes of Robyn Hood · and Randolf erle of Chestre,
 Ac neither of owre lorde ne of owre lady · the leste that euere
 was made.

I haue made vowes fourty · and for-ȝete hem on the morne ;
 I parfourned neure penaunce · as the prest me hiȝte, 405
 Ne ryȝte sori for my synnes · ȝet was I neuere.
 And ȝif I bidde any bedes · but if it be in wrath,
 That I telle with my tonge · is two myle fro myne herte. 408

Schal neuer fysch on Frydai · defyen in my mawe,
 Er Abstinence myn aunte · haue i-ziue me leue; 220
 And 3it ichaue i-hated hire · al my lyf-tyme.'

On fastingdais by-fore none · ich fedde me with ale,
 Out of reson, a-mong rybaudes · here rybaudrye to huyre.

Her-of, good god · graunte me forzeuenesse, 436
 Of al my luther lyuyng · in al my lyf-tyme.

For ich a-vowe to verrey god · for hunger other for thurste,
 Schal neuere fish on Fryday · defye in my wombe,
 Tyl Abstinence myn aunte · haue zeue me leue, 440
 And 3ut haue ich hated hure · al my lyf-tyme.'

Hic explicit passus septimus.

PASSUS VIII.

Incipit passus octauus.

CONFESSIO ACCIDIE.

THO cam Sleuthe al by-slobered · with two slymed eyen.
 'Ich most sitte to be shryuen,' quath he · 'or elles shal
 ich nappe.

Ich may nouht stonde ne stoupe · ne with-oute stoule knele.
 Were ich brouhte in my bed · bote my taylende hit made, 4
 Sholde no ryngynge do me ryse · tyl ich were rype to dyne.'
Benedicite he by-gan with a bolke · and hus brest knokede,
 Rasclod and remed · and route at the laste.

'What a-wake, renk,' quath Repentaunce · 'rape the to shryfte!'
 'Sholde ich deye,' quath he, 'by this daye · ich drede me sore, 9
 Ich can nouht parfytliche my *pater-noster* · as the prest hit
 seggeth.

Ich can rymes of Robyn Hode · and of Randolf, erl of Chestre,
 Ac of oure lord ne of oure lady · the lest that euere was maked.
 Ich haue a-vowed vowes fourty · and for-3ut hem a morwe; 13
 Ich parfourned neuere penaunce · that the preest me hihte,
 Ne ry3t sory for my synnes · ich sey neuere the tyme.
 And ich bidde eny bedis · bote hit be in wratthe, 16
 That ich telle with my tunge · ys ten myle fro my herte.

C. 1. to (*for* two) PM. 2. shryuen E; shryue P. 3. stonnde P.
 9. me so sore P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

I am occupied eche day · haliday and other,
 With ydel tales atte ale · and otherwhile in cherches;
 Goddes peyne and his passioun · ful selde thynke I there-on.

I visited neuere fieble men · ne fettered folke in puttes; 412
 I haue leuere here an harlotrie · or a somer-game of souteres,
 Or lesynges to laughe at · and belye my neighbore,
 Than al that euere Marke made · Mathew, Iohn, and Lucas.
 And vigilies and fastyng-dayes · alle thise late I passe, 416
 And ligge abedde in lenten · an my lemman in myn armes,
 Tyl matynes and masse be do · and thanne go to the freres;
 Come I to *ite, missa est* · I holde me yserued.

I nam nouzte shryuen some tyme · but if sekenesse it make, 420
 Nouzt tweies in two 3ere · and thanne vp gesse I schryue me.

I haue be prest and parsoun · passynge thretti wynter,
 3ete can I neither solfe ne synge · ne seyntes lyues rede,
 But I can fynde in a felde · or in a fourlonge an hare; 424
 Better than in *beatus vir* · or in *beati omnes*

Construe oon clause wel · and kenne it to my parochienes.
 I can holde louedayes · and here a reues rekenynge,
 Ac in canoun ne in the decretales · I can nouzte rede a lyne.

3if I bigge and borwe it · but 3if it be ytailed, 429
 I for3ete it as 3erne · and 3if men me it axe
 Sixe sithes or seuene · I forsake it with othes,
 And thus tene I trewe men · ten hundreth tymes. 432

And my seruauntz some tyme · her salarye is bihynde,
 Reuthe is to here the rekenynge · whan we shal rede acomptes;
 So with wikked wille and wraththe · my werkmen I paye.

3if any man doth me a benfait · or helpeth me at nede, 436
 I am vnkynde a3ein his curteisye · and can nouzte vnderstonde it;
 For I haue and haue hadde · some dele haukes maneres,
 I nam nouzte lured with loue · but there ligge auzte vnder the
 thombe.

The kyndenesse that myne euene-cristene · kidde me fernyere,
 Sixty sythes I, Sleuthe · haue for3ete it sith, 441

B 434. the WCO; L *om.* 440. fernyere WCR; ferne 3er O; farnere L.
 441. for3ete L. C. 21. viseted P. 22. harletrye P. 25. for3ete MSF;

[*Not in A-text.*]

Ich am ocupied eche day · haly day and other,
 With ydel tales atte nale · and other-whyle in churches;
 Godes pyne and hus passion · is pure selde in my thouhte. 20

Ich visited neuere feble man · ne feterid man in prisone;
 Ich hadde leuere huyre of harlotrye · other of a lesyng to
 lauhē of,

Other lacke men, and lykne hem · in vnlykyngē manere,
 Than al that euere Marc made · Matheu, Iohan, other Lucas. 24
 Vigilies and fastyngdayes · ich can for-ȝete hem alle.

Ich ligge a bedde in Lente · my lemman in myn armes,
 Tyl matyns and messe be don · then haue ich a memorie atte
 freres.

Ich am nouht shryuen som tyme · bote syknesse hit make, 28
 Nouht twyes in ten ȝer · ȝut tel ich nauht the haluēdele.

Ich haue be prest and person · passyng therty wintere,
 ȝut can ich nother solfye ne syngē · ne a seyntes lyf rede.
 Ac ich can fynde in a felde · and in a forlang an hare, 32
 And holden a knyȝtes court · and a-counte with the reyue;
 Ac ich can nouht constrye Catoun · ne clergialliche reden.

Yf ich bygge and borwe ouht · bote hit be y-tayled,
 Ich for-ȝete hit as ȝerne · and yf eny man hit asketh, 36
 Sixe sithe other seuene · ich for-sake hit wiȝh othes;
 Thus haue ich tened trewe men · ten hondred tymes.

And som tyme my seruauens · here salarye is byhynde;
 Reuthe ys to huyre the rekenyng · whenne we shulleth rede a-
 countes, 40

That with so wicked wil · my werkmen ich paye.

If eny man doth me a byn-fet · other helpeth me at nede,
 Ich am vnkynde aȝeyns courtesye · ich can nat vnderstonde hit.
 For ich haue and haue had · somdel haukes maneres, 44
 Ich am nat lured with loue · bote ouht lygge vnder thombe.

The kyndenesse that myn emcristene · kydde me fern ȝere,
 Syxty sithe ich sleuthe · haue for-ȝute hit sitthe.

for-ȝute P (*and in l.* 36). 26. lemman MIEF; lemen P. 34. catoun M1;
 canon PES. 36. P *om.* 1st hit. 38. tened MIES; tuned P. 39. salarye P.
 42. nede IMFSE; nude P. 43. vnderstonnde P.

Sleuthe for serwe · fel doun i-swowene,
 Til *Vigilate* the veil · fette water at his eizen,
 And flatte on his face · and faste on him crijede, 224
 And seide, 'war the for wonhope · that wol the bi-traye.
 "Icham sori for my sunnes" · sei to thi-seluen,
 And bet thi-self on the breste · and bidde god of grace,
 For nis no gult her so gret · his merci nis wel more.' 228
 Thenne sat Sleuthe vp · and sikede sore,
 And made a-vou bi-fore god · for his foule sleuthe ;

In speche and in sparynge of speche · yspilte many a tyme
 Bothe flesche and fische · and many other vitailles ;
 Bothe bred and ale · butter, melke, and chese 444
 Forsleuthed in my seruyse · til it myzte serue noman.

I ran aboute in youthe · and gaf me nouzte to lerne,
 And euere sith haue be beggere · for my foule sleuthe ;
Heu michi, quod sterilem vitam duxi iuuenilem. 448

'Repentestow the nauzte?' quod Repentance · and rizte with
 that he swowned,
 Til *Vigilate* the veille · fette water at his eyzen,
 And flatte it on his face · and faste on hym criede,
 And seide, 'ware the fram wanhope · wolde the bitraye. 452
 "I am sori for my synnes" · sey so to thi-selue,
 And bete thi-selue on the breste · and bidde hym of grace ;
 For is no gult here so grete · that his goodnesse nys more.'

Thanne sat Sleuthe vp · and seyned hym swithe, 456
 And made avowe to-fore god · for his foule sleuthe,
 Shal no Sondaye be this seuene zere · but sykenesse it lette,
 That I ne shal do me er day · to the dere cherche,
 And heren matines and masse · as I a monke were. 460
 Shal none ale after mete · holde me thennes,
 Tyl I haue euensonge herde · I behote to the rode.
 And zete wil I zelde azein · if I so moche haue,
 Al that I wikkedly wan · sithen I wytte hadde. 464

And though my liflode lakke · leten I nelle,
 That eche man ne shal haue his · ar I hennes wende:

A. 231. be TU; V om. 232. dore (*for* deore) V; dere T. B. 447.
 haue C; haue I WO; L om. 448. *quod* R; *quia* LWCO. C. 48. many
 FS; myn P; my E. 50. eche a P. 51. an (*for* and) P. 52. For

'Schal no Sonenday be this seuen ȝer · (bote seknesse hit make),
That I ne schal do me ar day · to the deore churchē, 232
And here matins and masse · as I a monk were.

Schal non ale after mete : holde me thennes,
Til ichaue euensong herd · I beo-hote to the rode.
And ȝit I-chulle ȝelden aȝeyn · ȝif I so muche haue, 236
Al that I wikkedliche won · seththe I wit hade.

And thauh my lyflode lakke · letten I nulle
That vche mon schal hebben his · er ich henne wende :

In speche and in sparyng of speche · yspilt many tymes 48
Bothe flesh and eke fish ; · and vitale ich kepte so longe,
Til eche lyf hit lothede · to lokye ther-on, other smylle hit ;
Bothe bred and ale · botere, melke, and chese
For-sleuthed in my seruice · and sette hous a fuyre, 52
And ȝede a-bowte in my ȝouthē · and ȝaf me to no thedom,
And sitthe a beggere haue y-be · for my foule sleuthe ;
Heu michi, quod sterilem · duxi uitam iuuenilem !

'Repente the,' quath Repentaunce · and ryȝt with that he
swouned, 56

Til *Vigilate* the veille · vette water at hus eyen,
And flatte on hus face · and fast on hym criede,
And seide, 'war fro wanhope · that wol the by-traye.
'Ich am sory for my synnes" · seye to thy-selue, 60
And bet thy-selue on the brest · and bidde god of grace ;
For ther is no gilte so gret · that hus goodnesse ne ys more.

Thanne sat Sleuthe vp · and seynede hym ofte,
And made a-vowe by-for god · for hus foule sleuthe, 64
'Shal no Soneday this seuene ȝer be · bote sycknesse hit make,
That ich ne shal do me or daye · to the dere churchē,
And huyre matyns and masse · as ich a monke were.
Shal no ale after mete · holde me thennes, 68
Til ich haue hurd euesong · ich by-hote to the rode !'

<p><i>From</i> C. vii. 310-313. (P. 155.)</p>	<p>[He highte 'ȝyuan ȝeld-aȝeyn · if-ich-so-moche-haue, Al that ich wickedelich wan · sytthen ich wit hadde ; And thauh my liflode lacke · leten ich nelle, That ech man shal haue hus · er ich hennes wende.]</p>	<p>312</p>
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sleuthe P. P om. and. 53. pedam P. 56. and MIF; P om. 62.
is—gret I; is gult noon so gret SG; nys non so gret synne PE. 64. good
(for god) P.

And with the residue and the remenaunt · (bi the rode of
Chester!)

240

I schal seche seynt Treuthe · er I seo Rome!'

Robert the robbour · on *Reddite* he lokede,
And for ther nas not wher-with · he wepte ful sore.

But ȝit the sunfol schrewe · seide to him-seluen :

244

'Crist, that vppon Caluarie · on the cros dizedest,

Tho Dismas my brother · bi-souȝte the of grace,

And heddest merci of that mon · for *memento* sake,

Thi wille worth vppon me · as ich haue wel deseruet

248

To haue helle for euere · ȝif that hope neore.

And with the residue and the remenaunt · bi the rode of
Chestre!

I shal seke treuthe arst · ar I se Rome!'

468

Robert the robbere · on *reddite* lokede,
And for ther was nouȝte wher-of · he wepe swithe sore.

Ac ȝet the synful shrewe · seyde to hym-selue,

'Cryst, that on Caluarye · vppon the crosse deydest,

472

Tho Dismas my brother · bisouȝte ȝow of grace,

And haddest mercy on that man · for *memento* sake,

So rewe on this robberè · that *reddere* ne haue,

Ne neuere wene to wyne · with crafte that I owe.

476

But for thi mykel mercy · mitigacioun I biseche;

Ne dampne me nouȝte at domesday · for that I did so ille.'

What bifel of this feloun · I can nouȝte faire schewe,

Wel I wote he wepte faste · water with bothe his eyen,

480

And knowleched his gult · to Cryst ȝete eftsones,

That *penitencia* his pyke · he shulde polsche newe,

And lepe with hym ouer londe · al his lyf-tyme,

For he had leyne bi *Latro* · Luciferes aunte.

484

[Which ben the braunches · that bryngeth a man to sleuth?

Is whanne a man morneth nouȝte for his mysdedes · ne maketh no
sorwe,

From

B. xiii.

410-416.

Ac penaunce that the prest enioigneth · perfourneth yuel,

Doth none almes-dede · dret hym of no synne,

413

Lyueþ aȝein the bileue · and no lawe holdeth; . . .

And if he auȝte wole here · it is an harlotes tonge.

So rewe on me, Robert · that no red haue,
 Ne neuere weene to wyne · for craft that I knowe.
 Bote for thi muchel merci · mitigacion I be-seche; 252
 Dampne me not on domes day · for I dude so ille.'

Ak what fel of this feloun · I con not feire schewe,
 But wel ich wot he wepte faste · watur with his eizen,
 And knoublechede his gult · to Crist 3it eft-sones, 256
 That *Penitencia* is pike · he schulde polissche newe,
 And lepe with him ouerlond · al his lyf-tyme,
 For he hath leizen bi *Latro* · Lucifers brother.

[Roberd the ryfeler · on *reddite* lokede, 316
 And for ther was nat wher-with · he wepte ful sore;
 And 3ut that synful shrewe · seide to heuene,
 'Crist, that on Caluarye · on the croys deidest,
 Tho Dismas my brother · by-souhte the of grace, 320
 And haddest mercy on that man · for *memento* sake,
 So rewe on me, Roberd · that *reddere* ne haue,
 Ne neuere wene to wyne · with craft that ich knowe.
 For thy muchel mercy · mytigacion ich by-seche, 324
 Dampne me nouht at domys day · for that ich dude so ille.'
 What by-fel of this felon · ich can nouht faire shewe;
 Wel ich wot he wepte faste · water with hus eyen,
 And to Crist knowlechede · hus coupe 3ut eft-sone, 328
 That penaunce hus pyk-staf · he wolde polische newe,
 For he hadde leye by *Latro* · Lucifers aunte.]

From
 C. vii.
 316-330
 (p. 157).

Ac whiche be the braunches · that bryngeth men to sleuthe?
 Ys, whanne a man mourneth nat · for hus mysdedes;
 The penaunce that the prest enioyneth · parfourneth vuele, 72
 Doth non almys-dedes · and drat nat of synne,
 Lyueth azens the by-leyue · and no lawe kepeth,
 And hath no lykyng to lerne · ne of oure lord hure,
 Bote harlotrie other horedom · other elles of som wynnyng. 76

[Not in A-text.]

From
B. xiii.
417-445.

Whan men carpeth of Cryst · or of clenness of soule,
He wexeth wroth and wil nouȝt here · but wordes of myrthe.
Penaunce and pore men · and the passioun of seyntes
He hateth to here there-of · and alle that it telleth. 420
Thise ben the braunches, beth war · that bryngeth a man to
wanhope!

Ȝe lordes and ladyes · and legates of holicherche,
That fedeth foles sages · flatereres and lyeres,
And han likynge to lythen hem · to do ȝow to lawghe; 424
Ve vobis qui ridetis, &c.

And ȝiueþ hem mete and mede · and pore men refuse,
In ȝowre deth-deyinge · I drede me ful sore,
Lest tho thre maner men · to moche sorwe ȝow brynge :
Consentientes et agentes pari pena puniuntur.

Patriarkes and prophetes · and prechoures of goddes wordes 428
Sauen thorw her sarmoun · mannes soule fram helle ;
Riȝt so flatereres and foles · aren the fendes disciples,
To entice men thorw her tales · to synne and harlotrye.
Ac clerkes that knowen holywryt · shulde kenne lordes, 432
What Dauid seith of suche men · as the sauter telleth,
Non habitabit in medio domus mee, qui facit superbiam et qui loquitur iniqua :

Shulde none harlote haue audience · in halle ne in chambres,
There wise men were · witnesseth goddes wordes;
Ne no mysproude man · amonges lordes ben allowed. 436
Clerkes and kniȝtes · welcometh kynges ministrals,
And for loue of the lorde · litheth hem at festes;
Muche more, me thenketh · riche men schulde
Haue beggeres byfore hem · the whiche ben goddes ministrals, 440
As he seyth himself · seynt Iohan bereth witnesse:
Qui vos spernit, me spernit.

Forthi I rede ȝow riche · reueles whan ȝe maketh
For to solace ȝoure soules · suche ministrals to haue;
The pore, for a fol sage · syttinge at the heȝ table, 444
And a lered man, to lere the · what oure lorde suffred

C. 79. and I; PMSEF om.
PLSM om. 91. harletrie P.

84. lawghe I; lawe P. *quia lugebitis* E;
95. wise men IMSEF; wysmen P. 96.

[*Not in A-text.*]

Whan men carpen of Cryst · other of clenness of soule,
 He wext wroth, and wol nat huyre · bote wordes of murthe.
 Penaunce and poure men · and the passion of seyntes,
 He hateth to huyre ther-of · and alle that ther-of carpen. 80
 Thuse beth the braunches, be war · that bryngeth man to wan-
 hope.

Ȝe lordes and ladyes · and legates of holy churche,
 That feden fool sages · flaterers and lyers,
 And han lykyng to lythen hem · in hope to do ȝow lawghe :

Ve uobis qui ridetis, quia lugebitis, et cetera :

And ȝeueth suche mede and mete · and poure men refusen, 85
 In ȝoure deth-deyng · ich drede me sore
 Lest tho manere men · to moche sorwe ȝow bryng;

As god wole; *Consencientes et agentes pari pena punientur.*

Patriarkes and prophetes · prechours of godes wordes 88
 Sauen thorgh here sermons · mannes soule fro helle;
 Ryȝt so flaterers and foles · aren the fendes procuratores,
 Entysen men thorgh here tales · to synne and to harlotrie.
 Clerkus that knowen this · sholde kenne lordes, 92
 What Daud seide of suche men · as the sauter telleth,

Non habitabit in medio domus mee qui facit superbiam, qui loquitur iniqua.

Sholde non harlot haue audience · in halle ne in chaumbre,
 Ther that wise men were; · (witness of godes wordes),
 Nother a mys-proud man · among lordes be a-lowed. 96
 Clerkus and knyȝtes · welcometh kynges mynstrales,
 And for loue of here lordes · lithen hem at festes;
 Múche more, me thenketh · riche men auhte
 Haue beggers by-fore hem · whiche beth godes mynstrales, 100
 As he seith hym-self · seynt Iohan bereth witness,

Qui uos spernit, me eciam spernit.

Ther-for ich rede ȝow riche · reueles when Ȝe maken
 For to solace ȝoure soules · suche mynstrales to haue;
 The poure for a fol sage · syttyng at thy table, 104
 With a lered man, to lere the · what oure lord suffrede

mys-prout P. be MIF; P om. 97. wolcomeþ P. 98. PE om. And.
 104. fol MI; foole E; foul P; see l. 83.

[*Not in A-text.*]

From
B xiii.
446-457.

For to saue thi soule · fram Sathan thin enemy,
 And fithel the, without flaterynge · of gode Friday the storye;
 And a blynd man for a bourdeoure · or a bedrede womman, 448
 To crie a largesse by-for oure lorde · þoure good loos to schewe!
 Thise thre maner ministrals · maketh a man to lawhe,
 And, in his deth-deyinge · thei don him gret conforte,
 That bi his lyue lythed hem · and loued hem to here. 452
 Thise solaseth the soule · til hym-selue be-falle
 In a wel gode hope, for he wrouȝte so · amonges worthi þeyntes.
 Ac flatereres and foles · thorw here foule wordes,
 Leden tho that louen hem · to Luciferes feste, 456
 With *turpiloquio*, a lay of sorwe · and Luciferes fithel.]

And thanne had Repentance reuthe · and redde hem alle to
 knele,

‘For I shal biseche for al synful · owre saueoure of grace,
 To amende vs of owre mysdedes · and do mercy to vs alle.

Now god,’ quod he, ‘that of thi goodnesse · gonne the
 worlde make, 488

And of nauȝte madest auȝte · and man moste liche to thi-selue,
 And sithen suffredest for to synne · a sikennesse to vs alle,
 And al for the best, as I bileue · what euere the boke telleth,

O felix culpa! o necessarium peccatum Ade! &c.

For thourgh that synne thi sone · sent was to this erthe, 492

And bicam man of a mayde · mankynde to saue,

And madest thi-self with thi sone · and vs synful yliche,

Faciamus hominem ad ymaginem et similitudinem nostram;

Et alibi: qui manet in caritate, in deo manet, et deus in eo;

And sith with thi self sone · in owre sute deydest

On godefryday for mannes sake · at ful tyme of the daye, 496

There thi-self ne thi sone · no sorwe in deth feledest;

But in owre secte was the sorwe · and thi sone it ladde,

Captiuam duxit captiuitatem.

The sonne for sorwe ther-of · les syȝte for a tyme

[Not in A-Text.]

For to sauy thy saule · fram Satan thyn enemye,
 And fithle the, with-oute flaterynge · of goode Fryday the geste,
 And a blynde man for a bordiour · other a bedreden womman
 To crye a largesse by-fore oure lorde · ȝoure goode loos to
 shewe. 109

Thuse thre manere mynstrales · maken a man to lauhe;
 In hus deth-deynge · thei don hym gret comfort,
 That by hus lyue litheth hem · and loueth hem to huyre. 112
 Thuse solaceth the soule · til hym-self be-falle
 In a wel good hope, for he wroghte so · a-mong worthy seyntes;
 Ther flaterers and foles · with here foule wordes
 Leden tho that lithen hem · to Luciferes feste, 116
 With *turpiloquio*, a lay of sorwe · and Lucifers fithle,
 To perpetuel peyne · other purgatorye as wykke;
 For he litheth and loueth · that godes lawe despicheth;
Qui histrionibus dat, demonibus sacrificat.

Tho was Repentaunce redy · and radde hem alle to knele,
 ‘Ich shal by-seche for alle synfulle · oure sauour of grace, 121
 To a-menden ous of oure mysdedes · do mercy to ous alle.
 God, of thy goodnesse · thow gonne the worlde make,
 And of nouht madest ouht · and man lyke thi-selue, 124
 Sitthe soffredest hym do synne · a syknesse to ous alle,
 And for oure best, as ich by-leyue · what-euere the book telle;
O felix culpa, o necessarium peccatum Ade!

For thorw that synne thy sone · sent was tyl erthe,
 And by-cam man of a mayde · mankynde to a-mende, 128
 And madest thi-selue with thy sone · oure soule and body lyche;
*Ego in patre, et pater in me est; et qui uidet me, patrem
 meum uidet.*

And sitthe in oure secte · as hit semed, thow deydest,
 On a Fryday, in forme of man · feledest oure sorwe;
Captiuam duxit captiuitatem.

The sonne for sorwe ther-of · lees lyght for a tyme, 132

C. 107. fipele EF; fitayle P. geste F; feste PEM; beste S. 112. *Read*
 litheþ (see B-text); loueþ PEMS; leued I; leueth F; cf. l. 119. 117.
 fithle P. 124. þe (for þi) P; see l. 60. 127. PE om. þat. 128. a IMF;
 PSE om. 129. þe (for þi) P. P om. in before patre. 130. secke P;
 see l. 137.

A thousent of men tho · throngen to-geders, 560
Weopyng and weylyng · for heore wikkede dedes,

Aboute mydday whan most lizte is · and mele tyme of seintes;

Feddest with thi fresche blode · owre forfadres in derknesse, 501

Populus qui ambulabat in tenebris, vidit lucem magnam;

And thorw the lizte that lepe oute of the · Lucifer was blent,
And blewe alle thi blissed · in-to the blisse of paradise.

The thrydde daye after · thow gedest in owre sute, 504

A synful Marie the seighe · ar seynte Marie thi dame,

And al to solace synful · thow suffredest it so were;

Non veni vocare iustos, set peccatores ad penitenciam.

And al that Marke hath ymade · Mathew, Iohan, and Lucas,

Of thyne douztie dedes · were don in owre armes; 508

Verbum caro factum est, et habitauit in nobis.

And bi so moche, me semeth · the sikerere we mowe

Bydde and biseche · if it be thi wille,

That art owre fader and owre brother · be merciabe to vs,

And haue reuthe on thise ribaudes · that repente hem here sore,
That euere thei wratthed the in this worlde · in worde, thouȝt,
or dedes.' 513

Thanne hent Hope an horne · of *deus, tu conuersus uiuificabis*
nos,

And blew it with *beati quorum · remisse sunt iniquitates,*

That alle seyntes in heuene · songen at ones, 516

Homines et iumenta saluabis, quemadmodum multiplicasti
misericordiam tuam, deus, etc.

A thousand of men tho · thrungen togyderes;

Çriede vpward to Cryst · and to his clene moder

To haue grace to go with hem · Treuthe to seke.

Crizinge vpward to Crist · and to his clene moder
To haue grace to seche seint Treuthe · god leue thei so mote!

A-bowte midday whanne most lyght ys · and meeltyme of
seyntes;

Feddest tho with thi fresshe blod · oure for-fadres in helle,
Populus qui ambulabat in tenebris, lucem magnam uidit.

The lyght that lemed out of the · Lucifer hit blente,
And broughte thyne blessedde fro thennes · in-to the blysse of
heuene. 136

The thridde day ther-after · thow ȝedest in oure secte;
A synful Marye the seyh · er seynt Marie thy moder,
And al to solace synful · thow soffredest hit so were;

Non ueni uocare iustos, sed peccatores ad penitenciam.

And al that Marc hath ymad · Matheu, Iohan, and Lucas, 140
Of thyne douhtieste dedes · was don in oure secte;

Uerbum caro factum est.

And by so moche hit semeth · the sykerloker we mowe
Bydde and by-seche the · yf hit be thy wil,
That art ferst oure fader · and of flessch oure brother, 144
And sitthen oure saueour · and seidest with thy tonge,
That what tyme we synful men · wolden be sory
For dedes that we han don ille · dampned sholde we be neuere,
Yff we knewelechid and cryde · Crist ther-of mercy; 148

*Quandocumque ingemuerit peccator, omnes iniquitates eius
non recordabor amplius.*

And for that mochel mercy · and Marie loue thy moder,
Haue reuthe of alle thuse rybaudes · that repenten hem sore,
That euere thei gulte azens the, god · in gost other in dede.

Thenne hente Hope an horn · of *deus, tu conuersus uiuificabis
nos,* 152

And blew hit with *beati quorum · remisse sunt iniquitates, et cetera,*
That alle seyntes with synful men · songen with Dauid,

*Homines et iumenta saluabis, domine, quemadmodum multipli-
casti misericordiam tuam, deus!*

A thousand of men tho · throngen to-gederes,
Cryyng vpward to Crist · and to hus clene moder, 156
To haue grace to go to Treuthe · god leyue that thei mote!

PASSUS VI.

Passus Sextus de visione, ut prius.

NOW riden this folk · and walken on fote
To seche that seint · in selcouthe londis.

Bote ther were fewe men so wys · that couthe the wei thider,
Bote bustelyng forth as bestes · ouer valeyes and hulles, 4
For while thei wente here owen wille · thei wente alle amys.
Til hit was late and longe · that thei a leod metten,
Apparayled as a palmere · in pilgrimes wedes.
He bar a bordun i-bounde · with a brod lyste, 8
In a wethe-bondes wyse · i-writhen aboute.
A bagge and a bolle · he bar bi his syde;

Ac there was wyzte non so wys · the wey thider couthe, 520
But blustreden forth as bestes · ouer bankes and hilles,
Til late was and longe · that thei a lede mette,
Apparailled as a paynym · in pylgrymes wyse.
He bare a burdoun ybounde · with a brode liste, 524
In a withewyndes wise · ywounden aboute.
A bolle and a bagge · he bare by his syde;
An hundreth of ampulles · on his hatt seten,
Signes of Synay · and shelles of Galice; 528
And many a cruche on his cloke · and keyes of Rome,
And the vernicle bifore · for men shulde knowe,
And se bi his signes · whom he souzte hadde.

This folke frayned hym firste · fro whennes he come? 532
'Fram Synay,' he seyde · 'and fram owre lordes sepulcre;
In Bethleem and in Babiloyne · I haue ben in bothe,
In Ermonye, in Alisaundre · in many other places.
3e may se bi my signes · that sitten on myn hatte, 536
That I haue walked ful wyde · in wete and in drye,
And souzte gode seyntes · for my soules helth.'

'Knowestow ouzte a corseint · that men calle Treuthe?

Coudestow auzte wissen vs the weye · where that wy dwelleth?' 540

An hundred of ampolles · on his hat seten,
 Signes of Synay · and schelles of Galys ; 12
 Moni cros on his cloke · and keizes of Rome,
 And the vernicle bi-fore · for men schulde him knowe,
 And seo be his signes · whom he souht hedde.

This folk fraynede him feire · from' whenne that he coome?
 'From Synay,' he seide, · 'and from the sepulcre;
 From Bethleem and Babiloyne · I haue ben in bothe,
 In Ynde and in Assye · and in mony other places.
 3e mouwe seo be my signes · that sitteth on myn hat, 20
 That I haue walked ful wyde · in weete and in druye,
 And souht goode seyntes · for my soule hele.'

'Knowest thou ouht a corseynt · men calleth seynt Treuthe?
 Const thou wissen vs the wey · wher that he dwelleth?' 24

Ac ther was weye non so wys · that the way thider couthe,
 Bote blostrede forth as bestes · ouer baches and hulles,
 Til late was and longe · that thei a lede mette, 160
 A-paraild as a paynym · in pylgrymes wise.
 He bar a bordon ybounde · with a brod lyste,
 In a weythwynde wyse · ywrythe al aboute ;
 A bolle and a bagge · he bar by hus syde, 164
 And an hondred hanypeles · on hus hatte seten,
 Signes of Syse · and shilles of Galys,
 And meny crouche on hus cloke · and keyes of Rome,
 And the fernycle by-fore · for men sholde knowe, 168
 And se by hus sygnes · wham he souht hadde.

Thys folke frayned hym furst · fro whennes he come?
 'Fro Sinay,' he sayde · 'and fro the sepulcre.
 In Bethleem, in Babilonie · ich haue ybe bothe, 172
 In Ermanie, in Alisaundre · and in Damascle,
 3e may see by my synges · that sitten on my cappe,
 Ich haue ysouht goode seyntes · for my soules helthe,
 And walked ful wide · in wete and in drye.' 176

'Knowst thou ouzt a cor-seynt,' quath ich · 'that men clepeth
 Treuthe?
 Couthest thou wissen ous the way · whoder out treuthe wonyeth?'

'Nay, so god glade me!' · seide the gome thenne,
 'Sauh I neuere palmere · with pyk ne with schrippe
 Such a seint seche · bote now in this place.'

'Peter!' quod a plouz-mon · and putte forth his hed, 28
 'I knowe him as kuyndeliche · as clerk doth his bokes;
 Clene concience and wit · kende me to his place,
 And dude enseure me seththe · to serue him for euere.
 Bothe to sowen and to setten · while I swynke mihte, 32
 I haue ben his felawe · this fiftene wynter;
 Bothe i-sowed his seed · and suwed his beestes,
 And eke i-kept his corn · i-caried hit to house,

'Nay, so me god helpe!' · seide the gome thanne,
 'I seygh neuere palmere · with pike ne with scrippe
 Axen after hym er · til now in this place.'

'Peter!' quod a plowman · and put forth his hed, 544
 'I knowe hym as kyndely · as clerke doth his bokes;
 Conscience and Kynde Witte · kenned me to his place,
 And deden me suren hym sikerly · to serue hym for euere,
 Bothe to sowe and to sette · the while I swynke myghte. 548
 I haue ben his folwar · al this fifty wyntre;
 Bothe ysowen his sede · and sued his bestes,
 With-inne and with-uten · wayted his profyt.
 I dyke and I delue · I do that treuthe hoteth; 552
 Some tyme I sowe · and some tyme I thresche,
 In tailoures crafte and tynkares crafte · what Treuthe can deuyse,
 I weue an I wynde · and do what Treuthe hoteth.
 For thouȝe I seye it my-self · I serue hym to paye. 556
 Ich haue myn huire of hym wel · and otherwhiles more;
 He is the pretest payer · that pore men knoweth;
 He ne with-halt non hewe his hyre · that he ne bath it at euen.
 He is as low as a lombe · and loueliche of speche, 560
 And ȝif ȝe wilneth to wite · where that he dwelleth,
 I shal wisse ȝow witterly · the weye to his place.'

'ȝe, leue Pieres,' quod this pilgrymes · and profered hym huire
 For to wende with hem · to Treuthes dwellyng-place. 564

I-dyket and i-doluen · i-don what he hihte, 36
 With-innen and withouten · i-wayted his profyt;
 Ther nis no laborer in this leod · that he loueth more,
 For thauh I sigge hit my-self · I serue him to paye.
 I haue myn hure of him wel · and otherwhile more; 40
 He is the preteste payere · that pore men habbeth;
 He with-halt non hyne his huire · that he hit nath at euen.
 He is as louh as a lomb · louelich of speche,
 And 3if 3e wolleth i-wite · wher that he dwelleth, 44
 I wol wissen ow the wey · hom to his place.'
 'Ye, leue Pers,' quod this palmers · and profreden him huire.

'Nay, so god me helpe' · seyde the gome thenne,
 'Ich seyh neuere palmere · with pyk ne with scrippe 180
 Asken after hym, er now · in thys ilke place.'

HIC PRIMO COMPARET PETRUS PLOUGHMAN.

'Peter!' quath a ploughman · and putte forth hus hefd,
 'Ich knowe hym as kyndeliche · as clerkus don hure bokes.
 Conscience and Kyndewit · kende me to hus place, 184
 And maked me sykeren hym sitthen · to seruen hym for euere,
 Bothe to sowe and to setten · the whyle ich swynke myghte,
 With-ynne and with-oute · to wayten hus profyt.
 Ich haue yben his folwer · al thes fourty wynter, 188
 And serued Treuthe sothlyche · somdel to paye;
 In alle kynne craftes · that he couthe deuyse ·
 Profitable to the plouh · he putte me to lerne;
 And thauh ich seye hit my-self · ich seruede hym to paye. 192
 Ich haue myn hyre of hym wel · and other whyle more;
 He ys the most prest paiere · that eny poure man knoweth.
 He with-halt non hewe · hus hyre ouere euen;
 He ys louh as a lombe · and leel of hus tonge, 196
 And ho so wilneth to wyte · wher that Treuthe wonyeth,
 Ich wol wissen 3ow wel · ryght to hus place.'
 '3e, leue Peers,' quath tho pylgrymes · and profrede Peers
 mede.

557. of hym R; L om.

C. 180. shrippe P.

183. lich (*for* Ich) P.

185. seren (*for* seruen) P.

191. Profitable P.

194. PE om. the.

195. hewe I; hywe P; hyne EMSFG.

So bouweth forth bi a brok · Beo-boxum-of-speche, 56
 Forth til 3e fynde a forde · 3our-fadres-honoureth;
 Wadeth in that water · wasscheth ow wel there,
 And 3e schul lepe the lihtloker · al oure lyf-tyme.
 Sone schaltou thenne i-seo · Swere-not-but-thou-haue-neode-
 And-nomeliche-in-idel- · the-nome-of-god-almihti.

Thenne schul 3e come bi a croft · but cum 3e not ther-inne;
 The croft hette Coueyte-not- · mennes-catel-ne-heore-wyues-
 Ne-non-of-heore-seruauns- · that-nuyzen-hem-mihte; 64

‘Nay, by the peril of my soule’ · Peers gan swere, 200
 ‘Ich nolde fonge a ferthing · for seynt Thomas shryne!
 Were it told to Treuthe · that ich toke mede,
 He wolde louye me the lasse · a longe tyme after.

ALTA VIA AD FIDELITATEM EST OBSERVATIO .X. PRECEPTORUM, UT
 DICIT PETRUS PLOUHMANN.

Ac who so wol wende · ther as Treuthe dwelleth, 204
 This ys the heye weye thyderwarde · wyteth wel the sothe.
 3e most gon thorwe Meknesse · alle men and wommen,
 Tyl 3e come to Conscience · knowen of god selue,
 That 3e loue hym as lord · leelliche a-bouen alle; 208
 That ys to seye sothliche · 3e sholde rather deye
 Than eny dedliche synne do · for drede oþer for preyere.
 And thenne 3oure neghebores next · in none wyse apeyre,
 Other-wyse than 3e wolde · thei wroughte 3ou alle tymes. 212

And so goth forth by the brok · a brygge as hit were,
 Tyl 3e fynde a forde · 3oure-fadres-honoureth;
 Wadeth wel in that water · and wascheth 3ow wel there,
 And 3e shulle lepe the lyghtloker · al 3oure lyf-tyme; 216

Honora patrem et matrem, et eris longeuus super terram.

Thanne shalt thou see Swery-nat- · bot-yt-be-for-nede-
 Nameliche-an-ydel- · the-name-of-god-al-myghty.
 Thanne shalt thou come by a croft · ac com thou nat ther-
 ynne,
 The croft hatte Coueyte-nat- · mennes-catel-ne-here-wyues- 220
 Ne-non-of-here-seruans- · that-nuyen-hem-myghte;

Loke thou breke no bouȝ there · but ȝif hit beo thin owne.

Twei stokkes ther stondeth · but stunt thou not there,
Thei hetten, Sle-not, Ne-stel-not · stryk forth bi hem bothe;
Lef hem on thi luft half · loke hem not astur, 68
And hold wel thin haly-day · euere til euen.

Thenne schaltou blenchen at a brok · Ber-no-fals-witnesse,
He is frettet with-innen with floreyngs · and othes wel monye;
Loke thou plokke no plonte ther · for peril of thi soule. 72

Thenne schaltou se Sei-soth- · so-hit-beo-to-done-
And-loke-that-thou-lyȝe-not- · for-no-monnes-bidyng.

Thenne schaltou come to a court · cleer as the sonne,
The mot is of Merci · the maner al abouten, 76

Loke ȝe breke no bowes there · but if it be ȝowre owne. 584

Two stokkes there stondeth · ac stynte ȝe nouȝte there,
They hatte Stele-nouȝte, Ne-slee-nouȝte · stryke forth by bothe;
And leue hem on thi left halfe · and loke nouȝte there-after;
And holde wel thyne haliday · heighe til euen. 588

Thanne shaltow blenche at a berghe · Bere-no-false-witnesse,
He is frithed in with floreines · and other fees many;
Loke thow plukke no plante there · for peril of thi soule.

Thanne shal ȝe se Sey-soth- · so-it-be-to-done- 592
In-no-manere-ellis-nauȝte- · for-no-mannes-biddyng.

Thanne shaltow come to a courte · as clere as the sonne,
The mote is of Mercy · the manere aboute,
And alle the wallis ben of Witte · to holden Wille oute; 596
And kerneled with Crystendome · man-kynde to saue,
Boterased with Bileue-so- · or-thow-beest-nouȝte-ysaued.
And alle the houses ben hiled · halles and chambres,
With no lede, but with Loue · and Lowe-speche-as-bretheren. 600
The brugge is of Bidde-wel- · the-bette-may-thow-spede;
Eche piler is of Penance · of preyeres to seyntes,
Of Almes-dedes ar the hokes · that the gates hangen on.

Grace hatte the gateward · a gode man for sothe, 604
Hys man hatte Amende-ȝow · for many man him knoweth;
Telleth hym this tokene · that Treuthe wite the sothe;

A. 73. se UD; V *om.* B. 586. hatte CR; hatten O; hat L. 590.
fees WCR; fees L. 600. Wit L. C. 222. ȝif SM; if IG; PEF *om.*
owne MSF; owe PE. 223. stynt ESF; stunt P. 228. friȝed MIG;

And alle the walles beth of Wit · to holde Wil theroute;
 The carnels beth of Cristendam · the kuynde to saue,
 Brutaget with the Bileeue · wher-thorw we moten· beo sauet.
 Alle the houses beoth i-hulet · halles and chaumbres, 80
 With no led, bote with Loue- · as-Bretheren-of-o-wombe.
 The tour ther Treuthe is inne · i-set is aboue the sonne,
 He may do with the day-sterre · what him deore lyketh;
 Deth dar not do · thing that he defendeth. 84

Grace hette the 3ate-ward · a good mon forsothe,
 His mon hette A-mende-thou · for mony men him knoweth;
 Tel him this tokene · for Treuthe wot the sothe:

Loke thou bere nat there aweye · bote 3if yt be thyn owne.

Two stockes ther stonden · ac stynt thow nouht there;
 Thei hatte Stel-net and Slee-nat · stryk forth by hem bothe, 224
 And leue hem in thy lift hand · and loke nouht thereafter,
 And hold wel thyn halyday · heye tyl euen.

Thenne shalt thou blenche at a bergh · Ber-no-fals-wytnesse,
 He ys frithed yn with floreyne · and other fees menye, 228
 Loke thow plocke ther no plaunte · for peryl of thy soule.

Thanne shalt thow see Seye-sothe- · so-hit-be-to-done-
 In-no-manere-elles-nat- · for-no-mannes-preyere.

So shalt thow come to a court · as cleer so the sonne, 232
 The mot ys of Mercy · in myddes the manere,
 Al the wallynge ys of Wit · for Wil ne sholde hit wyne.
 The kernels beth of Crystendome · that kynde to saue,
 And boteraced with By-leyue-so- · other-thow-best-nat-saued. 236
 Alle the houses beth heled · halles and chambres,
 With no lede, bote with Loue · and with Leel-speche.
 The barres aren of Buxumnesse · as bretheren of on wombe.
 The brigge hatte Bid-wel- · the-bet-myght-thow-spede; 240
 Eche pyler ys of Penance · and prayers to seyntes,
 The hokes aren Almys-dedes · that the 3ates hongen on.

Grace hatte the gate-warde · a good man for sothe,
 Hus man hatte Anuende-3ow · meny man hym knoweth. 244
 Tel hym thys ilke tokne · 'Treuthe wot the sothe,

freped P. 230. see I; go by F; PEMS *om.* 236. best IM; beest G;
 worsthest (*sic*) P; worst ES. 239. breþeren IEF; breþres P. 240.
 bregge (*for* brigge) P. 242. dedes IMEF; dede PS.

'I performede the penaunce · that the prest me en-ioynede ; 88
 I am sori for my sunnes · and so schal I euere
 Whon I thenke ther-on · thauȝ I weore a pope.'
 Bidde A-mende-thou meken him · to his mayster ones,
 To wynne vp the wicket-ȝat · that the wey schutte, 92
 Tho that Adam and Eue · eeten heore bone ;
 For he hath the keye of the cliket · thauȝ the kyng slepe.
 And ȝif Grace the graunte · to gon in in this wyse,
 Thou schalt seo Treuthe him-self · sitten in thin herte. 96

'I parfourned the penaunce · the preest me enioyned,
 And am ful sori for my synnes · and so I shal euere, 608
 Whan I thinke there-on · theighe I were a pope.'
 Biddeth Amende-ȝow meke him · til his maistre ones,
 To wayue vp the wicket · that the womman shette,
 Tho Adam and Eue · eten apples vnrosted ; 612
*Per Euam cunctis clausa est, et per Mariam virginem iterum
 patefacta est ;*
 For he hath the keye and the cliket · thouȝ the kyng slepe.
 And if Grace graunte the · to go in in this wise,
 Thow shalt see in thi-selue · Treuthe sitte in thine herte,
 In a cheyne of charyte · as thow a childe were, 616
 To suffre hym and segge nouȝte · aȝein thi sires wille.

Ac bewar thanne of Wrath-the · that is a wikked shrewe,
 He hath enuye to hym · that in thine herte sitteth ;
 And pukketh forth pruyde · to prayse thi-seluen. 620
 The boldnesse of thi bienfetes · maketh the blynde thanne,
 And thanne worstow dryuen oute as dew · and the dore closed,
 Kayed and cliketed · to kepe the with-uten ;
 Happily an hundreth wyntre · ar thow eft entre. 624
 Thus myght thow lesen his loue · to late wel by thi-selue,

A. 91. Amende-thou ; A-mende V ; *but see* l. 86. 98. that wykkide TUD ;
 for he is a V. 99. in—sitteth TUD ; sitteth in thyn herte V. 103. kepe TD ;
 holden V. B. 611. wayne *or* wayue. 612. *iterum* ; in R only. 613.
 clikat L. 623. clikated L. C. 248. mekep M ; meek PS. 249. ȝates

Thenne loke that thou loue him wel · and his lawe holde ;
 Bote beo wel i-war of Wraththe · that wykkide schrewe,
 For he hath envye to him · that in thyn herte sitteth ;
 And puiteth forth pruide · to preisen thi-seluen. 100
 The boldnesse of thi benfes · blendeth thin eizen,
 And so worstestou i-driuen out · and the dore i-closet,
 I-keizet and i-kliketed · to kepe the ther-oute ;
 Hapliche, an hundred ȝer · er thou eft entre. 104
 Thus maihtou leosen his loue · to leten wel bi thi-seluen,

Ich am sory for my synnes · and so shal ich euere,
 And parfourne the penaunce · that the preest me highte.'

Rydeþ to A-mende-ȝow · meketh ȝow to hus mayster Grace,
 To openen and vndo · the hye ȝate of heuene, 249
 That Adam and Eue · aȝens ous alle shutte :

*Per Euam ianua celi cunctis clausa est, et per Mariam
 uirginem iterum patefacta est.*

A ful leel lady · vn-leek hure of grace ;
 Hue hath a keye and a clyket · thauh the kynge slepe, 252
 And may lede yn wham hue loueth · as here luf lyketh.

And yf Grace graunte the · to go yn in thys wise,
 Thow shalt se Treuthe sytte · in thy selue herte,
 And solace thy soule · and saue the fro pyne. 256

Al-so charge Charyte · a churche to make
 In thyn hole herte · to herberghwen alle treuthe,
 And synde alle manere folke · fode to hure saules,
 Yf loue and leaute · and owre lawe be trewe : 260

Quodcumque petieritis in nomine meo, dabitur enim uobis.

Be war thenne of Wratthe · that wickede shrewe,
 For he hath enuye to hym · that in thyn herte sytteth,
 And poketh forth pruyde · to preysy thi-selue.
 The boldnesse of thy bynfet · maketh the blynde thenne, 264
 So worst thow dryuen out as deuh · and the dore closed,
 Y-keyed and yclyketed · to close the with-oute,
 Hapliche an hondred wynter · ar thow eft entrie.
 Thus myght thou lese hus loue · to lete wel by thi-selue, 268

PEMS; *but* gate IF; *see* l. 251. 251. leel EMSFG; bel P. vn-leek IS;
 vnlek G; vn-lyke P; vnlocket M. 252. clykett P. 259. fode EMS;
 foude P. 260. trywe P. 265. worst SM; worth PEIG. 266.
 yclykeded P. 268. þe (*for* thi) PS.

Bote gete hit aȝeyn bi grace · and bi no ȝift elles.

Ak ther beoth seuen sustren · that seruen Treuthe euere,
And ben porters at posternes · that to the place longen. 108

That on hette Abstinence · and Humilitie a-nother,
Charite and Chastite · beoth tweyne ful choyse maidenēs,
Pacience and Pees · muche peple helpen,
Largesse the ladi · ledeth in ful monye. 112

Bote hose is sib to this sustren · so me god helpe!

Is wonderliche wel-comen · and feire vnderfonge.

And bote ȝe ben sibbe · to summe of theos seuene,

And neuere happiliche este entre · but grace thow haue.

Ac there aren seuene sustren · that seruen Treuthe euere,
And aren porteres of the posternes · that to the place longeth. 628

That one hat Abstenenee · and Humilite an other,
Charite and Chastite · ben his chief maydenēs,
Pacience and Pees · moche poeple thei helpeth,
Largenesse the lady · heo let in ful manye; 632

Heo hath hulpe a thousande oute · of the deueles ponfolde.

And who is sibbe to this seuene · so me god helpe!

He is wonderliche welcome · and faire vnderfongen.

And but-if ȝe be syb · to summe of thise seuene, 636

It is ful harde bi myne heued,' quod Peres · 'for any of ȝow
alle

To geten ingonge at any gate there · but grace be the more.'

'Now, bi Cryst,' quod a cutpurs · 'I haue no kynne there!'

'Ne I,' quod an apewarde · 'bi auȝte that I knowe!' 640

'Wite god,' quod a wafrestre · 'wist I this for sothe,

Shulde I neuere ferthere a fote · for no freres prechyng.'

'ȝus,' quod Pieres the plowman · and pukked hem alle to
gode,

'Mercy is a maydene there · hath myȝte ouer hem alle; 644

And she is syb to alle synful · and her sone also;

And thorouȝe the helpe of hem two · (hope thow none other),

Thow myȝte gete grace there · bi so thow go bityme.'

A. 126. go TUD; come V. B. 627. aren R; ar L; see l. 628.
O. 269. hit MSG; it I; PE om. gifte EI; gift M; geste S; gyse P.
278-280. so me—seuene from SIMEG; P omits. 282. engang P. 287.

Hit is ful hard, bi myn hed! · eny of ow alle 116
 To gete in-goynge at that ȝat · bote grace beo the more.'
 'Bi Crist,' quath a cutte-pors · 'I haue no kun there!'
 'No,' quath an apeward · 'for nout that I knowe!'
 'I-wis,' quath a waferer · 'wust I this for sothe, 120
 Schulde I neuere forthere a fote · for no freres prechinge.'
 'ȝus,' quath Pèrs the plouȝ-mon · and prechede hire to goode,
 'Merci is a mayden ther · and hath miht ouer hem alle;
 Heo is sib to alle synful men · an hire sone else; 124
 And thorw the help of hem two · (hope thou non other),
 Thou maiȝt gete grace ther · so that thou go bi-tyme.'

And geten hit a-geyn thorw grace · ac thorgh no gifte elles.
 Ther ben seuene sustres · that seruen Treuthe euere,
 And aren porters at posternes · that to the place longen;
 That on hatte Abstinence · and Humilite another, 272
 Charite and Chastite · ben hus chef maydenes,
 Pacience and Pees · muche puple helpen,
 Largenesse that lady · lat yn ful menye;
 Non of hem alle · helpe may yn betere, 276
 For hue paieth for prisons · in places and in peynes.
 And ho is sybbe to thuse seuene · so me god helpe!
 He is wondirlich welcome · and fayre vndirfonge.
 Ho is not sib to these seuene · sothly to telle, 280
 Hit is ful hard, by myn heued · eny of ȝou alle
 To geten ingang at eny gate · bote grace be the more.'
 'By Cryst,' quath a kitte-pors · 'ich haue no kyn there.'
 'Ne ich,' quath an apewarde · 'by ouht that ich knowe!' 284
 'Wyte god,' quath a wafrestre · 'wist ich the sothe,
 Ich wolde no forther a fot · for no freres prechinge.'
 'ȝus,' quath Peers plouhman · and pokede hem alle to goode;
 'Mercy is a mayde there · hath myght ouer hem alle; 288
 And hue is sybbe to alle synful · and hure sone bothe.
 And thorwe the help of hem two · hope thow non other,
 Thow myght gete grace ther · so thow go by tyme.'

PASSUS VII.

Passus septimus de visione, vi prius.

‘**T**HIS weore a wikked wei · bote hose hedde a gyde,
That mihte folwen us vch a fote · forte that we come
there.’

‘By seynt Poule,’ quod a pardonere · ‘peraventure I be
nouzte knowe there, 648
I wil go secche my box with my breuettes · and a bulle with
bisshopes lettres!’
‘By Cryst,’ quod a comune womman · ‘thi companye wil I
folwe,
Thow shalt sey I am thi sestre · I ne wot where thei bcome.’

PASSUS VI.

Passus Sextus.

‘**T**HIS were a wikked way · but who-so hadde a gyde
That wolde folwen us eche a fote;’ · thus this folke hem
mened.

Quath Perkyn the plouman · ‘bi seynt Peter of Rome,
I haue an half-acre to eryl · bi the heighe way; 4
Hadde I eried this half-acre · and sown it after,
I wolde wende with ȝow · and the way teche.’

‘This were a longe lettynge’ · quod a lady in a sklayre,
‘What sholde we wommen · worche there-whiles?’ 8

B. 3. Quatz L. 6. wolde WO; wil LR. C. 294. nude (*for* nede) P.
296. greipliche M; graithliche I; grettliche PESG. 301. syghit (*for* syghte) P.

Quath Perkyn the plouȝmon · ‘bi Peter the apostel,
 I haue an half aker to herie · bi the heiȝe weye; 4
 Weore he wel i-eried · thenne with ou wolde I wende,
 And wissen ou the rihte weye · til ȝe founden Treuthe.’
 ‘That weore a long lettynge’ · quath a ladi in a skleir,
 ‘What schul we wimmen · worche the while?’ 8

‘ȝe, *villam emi*,’ quath on · ‘and now most ich thudere, 292
 To loke how me lyketh hit’ · and tok hus leue at Peers.
 Another a-non ryght · nede seyde he hadde
 To folwen fif ȝokes · ‘for-thy me by-houeth
 To gon with a good wil · and greithliche hem dryue; 296
 For-thy ich praye ȝow, Peers · paraunter, yf ȝe meteth
 Treuthe, telleth to hym · that ich be excused.’
 Thenne was ther on heihte Actif · an hosebounde he semed;
 ‘Ich haue ywedded a wyf,’ quath he · ‘wel wantowen of maners;
 Were ich seuenyght fro hure syghte · synnen hue wolde, 301
 And loue on me and lyghtliche chide · and seye ich loue
 anothere.

For-thy, Peers plouhman · ich praye the telle hit Treuthe,
 Ich may nat come for a Kytte · so hue cleueth on me;
Vxorem duxi, et ideo non possum uenire.
 Quath Contemplacion, ‘by Crist · thauh ich care suffre,
 Famyn and defaute · folwen ich wolle Peers; 306
 Ac the wey ys so wyckede · bote ho so hadde a gyde
 That myght folwen ous ech fot · for drede of mys-tornyng.’
Hic explicit passus octauus.

PASSUS IX.

Incipit passus Nonus.

THO seyde Perken plouhman · ‘by seynt Peter of Rome,
 Ich haue an half-acre to eren · by the hye weye.
 Hadde ich ered that half-acre · and sowen hit after,
 Ich wolde wende with ȝow · and the wey teche.’ 4
 ‘That were a long lettynge’ · quath a lady in a skleire,
 ‘What sholde we wommen · worche the whiles?’

synnen M ; syngun S ; sinege G ; seggen P.
 307. P om. 2nd so. IX. 4. wit P.

304. cleueþ MISE ; clyueþ P.

'Summe schul souwe sakkes · for schedyng of whete,
 And 3e wyues that habbeth wolfe · worcheth hit faste,
 Spynneth it spedily · spareth noght 3our fynghres,
 Bote 3if hit beo haly day · or elles holy euen. 12
 Loketh forth or linnene · and labereth ther-on faste.
 The neodi and the nakede · nym 3eeme hou thei liggen,
 And cast on hem clothes for colde · for so wolde treuthe;
 For I schal lene hem lyfode · but 3if the lond fayle, 16
 As longe as I liue · for vr lordes loue of heuene.
 And 3e, loueli ladies · with oure longe fynghres,
 That habbeth selk, and sendel · souweth, whon tyme is,
 Chesybles for chapeleyns · and churches to honoure; 20

'Somme shal sowe the sakke,' quod Piers · 'for shedyng of
 the whete;
 And 3e, louely ladyes · with 3oure longe fynghres,
 That 3e han silke and sendal · to sowe, whan tyme is,
 Chesibles for chapelleyne · cherches to honoure. 12
 Wyues and wydwe · wolfe and flex spynneth,
 Maketh cloth, I conseil 3ow · and kenneth so 3owre dou3tres;
 The nedy and the naked · nymmeth hede how hij liggeth.
 And casteth hem clothes · for so comaundeth Treuthe. 16
 For I shal lene hem lyfode · but 3if the londe faille,
 Flesshe and bred bothe · to riche and to pore,
 As longe as I lyue · for the lordes loue of heuene.
 And alle manere of men · that thorw mete and drynke lyb-
 beth, 20
 Helpith hym to worche wiztliche · that wynneth 3owre fode.'
 'Bi Crist,' quod a kny3te tho · 'he kenneth vs the best;
 Ac on the teme trewly · tau3te was I neuere.
 Ac kenne me,' quod the kny3te · 'and, bi Cryst, I wil assaye!' 24
 'Bi seynt Poule,' quod Perkyn · '3e profre 3ow so faire,
 That I shal swynke and swete · and sowe for vs bothe,
 And other laboures do for thi loue · al my lyf-tyme,
 In couenaunt that thou kepe · holikirke and my-selue 28
 Fro wastoures and fro wykked men · that this worlde struyeth.

A. 11. *From* UTH; V *omits this line.* 23. *kennest* HU; *techest* V.
 25. *kenne* TU; *tech* V. 26. *This line is in H only.* B. 9. (1st) *the*
 WCRO; L *om.* C. 8. *wete* P. 9. *wit* P. 10. *to sewen* PE; MSG *om.* to.

And alle maner of men · that bi mete liuen,
Helpeth him worche wihtliche · that winneth oure fode.'

'Bi Crist,' quath a kniht tho · 'thou kennest vs the beste!
Saue o tyme trewely · thus tauht was I neuere! 24
Bote kenne me,' quod the kniht · 'and I-chul conne erie;
I wol helpe thee to labore · whil my lyf lastith.'

'Bi seint Peter,' quod Pers · 'for thou profrest the so lowe,
I schal swynken and sweten · and sowen for us bothe, 28
And eke labre for thi loue · al my lyf-tyme,
In couenaunt that thou kepe · holi chirche and my-seluen
From wastors and wikkede men · that wolden vs destruyen.

'Ich praye 3ow, for 3oure profit' · quath Peers to the ladyes,
'That somme sewe the sak · for shedyng of the whete: 8
And 3e worthly wommen · with 3oure longe fynGRES,
That 3e on selke and sendel · sewen, whenne tyme ys,
Chesybles for chapelayns · churches to honoure.

Wyues and widowes · wolle and flax spynneth; 12
Conscience consaileth 3ow · cloth for to make
For profit of the poure · and plesaunce of 3ow-selue.
For ich shal lene hem lyfode · bote yf the lond faile,
As longe as ich lyue · for oure lordes loue in heuene. 16
And alle manere men · that by this molde both susteyned,
Helpeth hem to worche wyghtly · that wynneth 3oure fode.'

'By Cryst,' quath a knyzt tho · 'he kenneth ous the beste;
Ac on the teeme trewely · tauht was ich neuere; 20
Ich wolde ich couthe,' quath the knyzt · 'by Cryst and hus
moder;

Ich wolde a-saye som tyme · for solas, as hit were.'

'Sykerliche, syre knyzt' · seide Peers thenne,
'Ich shal swynke and swete · and sowe for us bothe, 24
And labore for the while thou lyuest · al thy lyf-tyme,
In couenaunt that thou kepe · holy kirke and my-selue
Fro wastours and wyckede men · that this worlde struen.

wenne P.	11. honure P.	16. lyue IMSEG; leue P.	18.
whyghtly P.	20. trywely P.	23. knyzt P.	24. hus P.
25. lyuest EMS; leuest P.	26. kirke I; churche PEMS.	my EIG;	
me PMS.	27. Fro IMSEG; For PE.	this IMSE; þus P.	

And go thou hunte hardily · to hares and to foxes, 32
 To beores and to bockes · that breketh menne hegges,
 And fecche the hom faucuns · the foules to quelle;
 For thei comen in-to my croft · and croppen my whete.'

Ful curteisliche the kniht · conseiued theose wordes; 36
 'Be my pouwer, pers · I plithe the my trouthe
 To folfulle the foreward · while that I may stonde!'

'But 3it o poynt,' quod Pers · 'I preye the no more;
 Loke thou teone no tenaunt · bote Treuthe wol assente: 40

And go hunte hardiliche · to hares and to foxes,
 To bores and to brockes · that breketh adown myne hegges,
 And go affaite the faucones · wilde foules to kille; 32
 For suche cometh to my croft · and croppeth my whete.'

Curteislich the kny3te thanne · comsed thise wordes,
 'By my power, Pieres,' quod he · 'I plizte the my treuthe
 To fulfille this forward · thow3 I fizte sholde; 36
 Als longe as I lyue · I shal the mayntene.'

'3e, and 3it a poynt,' quod Pieres · 'I preye 3ow of more;
 Loke 3e tene no tenaunt · but Treuthe wil assent.
 And though 3e mowe amercy hem · late Mercy be taxoure, 40
 And Mekenesse thi mayster · maugre Medes chekes,
 And though pore men profre 3ow · presentis and 3iftis,
 Nym it nauzte, an auenture · 3e mowe it nauzte deserue;
 For thow shalt 3elde it a3ein · at one 3eres ende, 44
 In a ful perillous place · purgatorie it hatte.
 And mysbede nouzte thi bonde-men · the better may thow
 spede;

Though he be thyn vnderlynge here · wel may happe in heuene,
 That he worth worthier sette · and with more blisse, 48
 Than thow, bot thou do bette · and lyue as thow shulde;

Amice, ascende superius.

For in charnel atte chirche · cherles ben yuel to knowe,
 Or a knizte fram a knaue there · knowe this in thin herte.
 And that thow be trewe of thi tonge · and tales that thow
 hatie, 52

But if thei ben of wisdom or of witte · thi werkmen to chaste.
 Holde with none harlotes · ne here nouzte her tales,

And 3if pore men profreth ou · presentes or 3iftes,
 Taketh hem not, in auenture · 3e mouwen hem not deseruen;
 For thou schalt 3elden hit a-3eyn · at one 3eeres ende,
 In a wel perilous place · that purgatorie hette. 44
 And mis-beode thou not thi bonde-men · the beter thou schalt
 spede,
 And that thi-self be trewe of tonge · and tales thou hate,
 Bote hit beo wisdam or wit · thi werkmen to chaste.
 Hold not thou with harlotes · here not heore tales, 48

And go honte hardiliche · to hares and to foxes, 28
 To bores and to bockes · that breketh a-doune menne hegges;
 And faite thy faucones · to culle wylde foules;
 For thei comen to my croft · my corn to defoule.'
 Corteysliche the kny3t then · comsede these wordes; 32
 'By my power, Peers · ich plyghte the my treuthe,
 To defende the in faith · fyghte thauh ich sholde.'

'And 3ut on poynt,' quath Peers · 'ich praye 3ow ouermore;
 Loke 3e tene no tenaunt · bote yf Treuth wolle assente. 36
 Whenne 3e amercyn eny man · let Mercy be taxour,
 And Meknesse thy maister · maugre Mede chekes.
 Thauh poure men profre 3ou · presentes and 3iftes,
 Nym hit nat, an aunter · thow mowe hit nat deserue; 40
 For thow shalt 3ulde, so may be · and somdel a-bygge.

Mys-beede nouht thy bondemen · the bet may thou spede;

Thauh he be here thyn vnderling · in heuene, paraunter,
 He worth rather receyued · and reuerentloker sette; 44

Amice, ascende superius.

At church in the charnel · cheorles aren vuel to knowe,
 Other a knyght fro a knaue · other a queyne fro a queene.
 Hit by-cometh to a knyght · to be curteys and hende,
 Trewe of hys tonge · tales loth to huyre, 48
 Bote thei be of bounte · of batailes and of treuthe.
 Hald nat of harlotes · huyre nat here tales,

And nomeliche atte mete · suche men eschuwe,
 For thei ben the deueles disours · I do the to vndurstonde.
 ‘Ich a-sente, be seint Iem!’ · seide the kniht thenne,
 ‘For to worche bi thi word · while my lyf dureth.’ 52
 ‘And I schal a-paraile me,’ quod Perkin · ‘in pilgrimes wyse,
 And wende with ou the rihte wei · til 3e Treuthe fynde.’
 He caste on his clothes · i-clouted and i-hole,
 His cokes and his coffus · for colde of his nayles, 56
 He heng an hopper on his bac · in stude of a scrippe,
 A busschel of bred-corn · he bringeth ther-inne :
 ‘For I wol souwen hit my-self · and seththen with ou wende.

And nameliche atte mete · suche men eschue ;
 For it ben the deueles disoures · I do the to vnderstande.’ 56
 ‘I assente, bi seynt Iame’ · seyde the knihte thanne,
 ‘Forto worche bi thi wordes · the while my lyf dureth.’
 ‘And I shal apparaille me,’ quod Perkyn · ‘in pilgrimes wise,
 And wende with 3ow I wil · til we fynde Treuthe ; 60
 And cast on me my clothes · yclouted and hole,
 My cokes and my coffes · for colde of my nailles,
 And hange myn hopper at myn hals · in stede of a scrippe ;
 A busshel of bredcorne · brynge me ther-inne ; 64
 For I wil sowe it my-self · and sitthenes wil I wende
 To pylgrymage as palmers don · pardoun forto haue.
 Ac who so helpeth me to erie · or sowen here ar I wende,
 Shal haue leue, bi owre lorde · to lese here in heruest, 68
 And make hem mery there-mydde · maugre who-so bigruccheth
 it.

And alkyn crafty men · that konne lyuen in treuthe,
 I shal fynden hem fode · that feithfulliche libbeth.
 Saue lakke the iogeloure · and Ionet of the stues, 72
 And Danyel the dys-playere · and Denote the baude,
 And frere the faytoure · and folke of his ordre,

And Robyn the rybaudoure · for his rusty wordes.
 Treuthe tolde me ones · and bad me tellen it after, 76
Deleantur de libro viuentium · I shulde nouȝte dele with hem ;

A. 50. to THU ; V om.
 53. kirke I ; churche PES.

68. I—hem T ; V om.
 57. wit P.

C. 51. eschywe P.
 63. palmers EIS ; pilgrymes P.

For hose helpeth me to heren · or eny thing to swynken, 60
 He schal haue, beo vr lord · the more huyre in heruest,
 And make him murie with the corn · hose hit euere bigrucbeth.
 And alle kunnes craftus men · that cunne lyuen with treuthe,
 I schal fynden hem beore fode · that feithfuliche lyuen; 64
 Saue lacke the iogelour · and Ionete of the stuyues,
 And Robert the ribaudour · for his rousti wordes.
 Treuthe tauhte hit me ones · and bad me telle hit forther,
Deleantur de libro · I ne shulde not dele with hem; 68

Nameliche atte mete · suche men eschewe;
 Hit ben the deueles disours · to drawe men to synne. 52
 Contreplede nat conscience · ne holy kirke rygthes.'
 'Ich assente, by seynt Gyle' · seyde the knyght thenne,
 'For to worche by thy witt · and my wyf bothe.'
 'Ich shal aparaile me,' quath Perkyn · 'in pylgrymes wyse, 56
 And wende with alle tho · that wolle lyue in treuthe.'
 He caste on hym hus clothes · of alle kynne craftes,
 Hus cokeres and hus cuffes · as kynde witt hym tauhte,
 And heng hus hoper on hus hals · in stede of a scrippe; 60
 A boussel of bred-corn · brouht was ther-ynne.
 'For ich wolle sowe hit my-self · and sitthe wol y-wende
 To pylgrimages, as palmers don · pardon to wynne.
 My plouh-fot shal be my pyk-staf · and picche a-two the rotes,*
 And help my culter to kerue · and clanse the forwes.
 And alle that helpen me to eryl · other elles to weden,
 Shal haue leue, by oure lorde · to go and glene after,
 And make hym murie ther-myd · maugre ho by-grucche. 68
 And alle kynne crafty men · that conne lyue in treuthe,
 Ich shal fynde hem fode · that feythfullech lybben;
 Saf lack the iogelour · and Ionette of the styues,
 And Danyel the dees-pleyere · and Denote the baude, 72
 And al-so frere faytour · and folke of that ordre,
 That lollers and loseles · for leel men halden,
 And Robyn the rybaudour · for hus rusty wordes.
 For Treuthe tolde me ones · and bade me telle hit forthere, 76
Deleantur de libro uiuencium · ich sholde nat dele with hem;

71. (1st) the IMG; P om. 72. denete P. 73. that IMSEG; þe P. 76.
 me IMSEG; P om. hit MS; P om. * Cf. A. vii. 96; B. vi. 105; p. 202.

Holi churche is holden of hem · no tithe to taken ;

Et cum iustis non scribantur ;

Thei ben a-scaped good thrift · god hem amende !'

Dame werche-whon-tyme-is · hette Pers wyf,

His douhter hette Do-riht-so- · or-thi-dame-wol-the-bete, 72

His sone hette Soffre-thi-souereyns- · for-to-han-heor-wille-

And-deeme-hem-not-for-3if-thou-do- · thou-schalt-hit-deore-abugge.

'Let god worthe with al · for so his woord techith ;

For nou icham old and hor · and haue of myn owne, 76

For holicherche is hote of hem · no tythe to take,

Quia cum iustis non scribantur ;

They ben ascaped good auenture · now god hem amende !'

Dame Worche-whan-tyme-is · Pieres wyf hizte, 80

His douzter hizte Do-rihte-so- · or-thi-dame-shal-the-bete,

His sone hizte Suffre-thi-souereynes- · to-hauen-her-wille-

Deme-hem-nouzte-for-if-thow-doste- · thow-shalt-it-dere-abugge.

'Late god yworth with al · for so his worde techeth ; 84

For now I am olde and hore · and haue of myn owen,
To penaunce and to pilgrimage · I wil passe with thise other.
For-thi I wil, or I wende · do wryte my biqueste.

In dei nomine, amen · I make it my-seluen. 88

He shal haue my soule · that best hath yserued it,

And fro the fende it defende · for so I bileue,

Til I come to his acountes · as my *credo* me telleth,

To haue a relees and a remissioun · on that rental I leue. 92

The kirke shal haue my caroigne · and kepe my bones ;

To penaunce and to pilgrimage · I wol passe with this othure.
For-thi I wole, ar I wende · write my testament.

In dei nomine, amen · I make hit mi-seluen.

He schal haue my soule · that best hath deseruet, 80
And defende hit from the fend · for so I beo-leeue,
Til I come to myn a-countes · as my crede me telleth,
To ha reles and remission · on that rental I be-leeue.
The chirche schal haue my careyne · and kepe mi bones; 84

For holy churche hoteth · of hem to aske no tythe,

Quia cum iustis non scribantur;

Thei ben ascaped good aunter · now god hem amende!

Dame Worche-when-tyme-is · Peers wyf hyhte; 80
Hus douhter hihte Do-ryght-so- · other-thy-damme-shal-the-bete;
Hus sone hihte Suffre- · thy-souereynes-haue-here-wil-
Deme-hem-nouht-for-yf-thow-do- · thow-shalt-dere-abigge.
'Consaile nat the comune · the kyng to displese, 84
Ne hem that han lawes to loke · lacke hem nat, ich hote,
Let god worthe with al · as holy writ techeth;

Super cathedram Moysi sedent, et cetera;

Maistres, as the meyres ben · and grete men senatours,
What thei comaunde as by the kyng · contrepleide hit neuere,
Al that they hoten, ich hote · heyliche, thow suffre hem; 89
By here warnyng and worchyng · worch thow ther-after;

Omnia que dicunt, facile et seruale;

Ac after here doynge do thow nat · my dere sone,' quath Peers.
'For now ich am old and hor · and haue of myn owene, 92
To penaunces and to pilgrimages · ich wol passe with othere;
For-thi ich wolle, er ich wende · do wryten my byquyste.

TESTAMENTUM PETRI PLOUHMANN.

In dei nomine, amen · ich make hit my-self.

He shal haue my soule · that alle soules made, 96
And defende hit fro the feende · and so is my by-leyue,
Til ich come to hus aountes · as my crede telleth,
To haue remissioun and relees · on that rental ich leue.
The kirke shal haue my caroyne · and kepe my bones, 100

C. 80. wen P. 81. heithe P; see l. 82. 89. they IES; þe P. 98, 99.
From IG; P om. 100. kirke IM; churche P.

For of my corn and catel · heo craueth the tithe.
 I payede him prestly · for peril of my soule,
 He is holden, ich hope · to haue me in muynde,
 And munge me in his memorie · among alle Cristene. 88

Mi wyf schal haue that I won · with treuthe, and no more,
 And dele a-mong my frendes · and my deore children.
 For thauh I dye this day · my dettes beoth i-quit;
 I bar hom that I borwede · er I to bedde eode, 92
 And with the residue and the remenaunt · by the rode of Chestre!
 I wol worschupe ther-with · Treuthe in my lyue,
 And ben his pilgrym atte plouȝ · for pore mennes sake.
 Mi plouh-pote schal be my pyk · and posshen atte rootes,* 96
 And helpe my coltre to kerue · and close the vorwes.'

For of my corne and catel · he craued the tythe.
 I payed it hym prestly · for peril of my soule,
 For-thy is he holden, I hope · to haue me in his masse, 96
 And mengen in his memorye · amonge alle Crystene.

My wyf shal haue of that I wan · with treuthe, and nomore,
 And dele amonge my douȝtres · and my dere children.
 For thowghe I deye to-daye · my dettes ar quitte, 100
 I bare home that I borwed · ar I to bedde ȝede.
 And with the residue and the remenaunte · bi the rode of
 Lukes!

I wil worschip ther-with · Treuthe bi my lyue,
 And ben his pilgryme atte plow · for pore mennes sake. 104
 My plow-fote shal be my pyk-staf · and picche atwo the rotes,*
 And helpe my culter to kerue · and clense the forwes.'

Now is Perkyn and his pilgrymes · to the plowe faren;
 To erie this halue-acre · holpyn hym manye. 108
 Dikeres and delueres · digged vp the balkes;
 There-with was Perkyn apayed · and preysed hem faste.
 Other werkeman there were · that wrouȝten ful ȝerne,
 Eche man in his manere · made hym-self to done, 112
 And some to plese Perkyn · piked vp the wedes.

At heighe pryme Peres · lete the plowe stonde,
 To ouersen hem hym-self · and who-so best wrouȝte,
 He shulde be huyred ther-after · whan heruest-tyme come. 116

And thanne seten somme · and songen atte nale,
 And hulpen erie his half-acre · with 'how! trollilolli!'

Now is Pers and the pilgrimes to the plouh i-fare;
 To heren this half-acre · helpen him ful monye.
 Dykers and deluers · dikeden vp the balkes; 100
 Ther-with was Perkyn a-payd · and preisede hem 3erne.
 Othur werk-men ther weren · that wrou3ten ful monye,
 Vche mon in his maner · made him to done;
 And summe, to ·plese Perkyn · pykeden vp the wꝛodes. 104
 At heiz prime Perkyn · lette the plou3 stonde,
 While that he ouer-se3e him-self · ho that best wrouhte;
 He schulde ben huyred ther-aftur · whon heruest-tyme come.
 Thenne seten summe · and songen atte ale, 108
 And holpen him to herien · with 'hey! trolly-lolly!'

For of my corn and catel · he crauede my tythe.
 Ich payed hit prestliche · for peril of my soule,
 He is holdinge, ich hope · to haue me in hus masse,
 And munge me in hus memorie · among alle Cristine. 104
 My wyf shal haue of that ich wan · with treuthe, and no more,
 And dele hit among my douhtres · and my dere children.
 For thauh ich deyde thys day · my dettes ben quytet;
 Ich bar hom that ich borwede · er ich to bedde 3eode. 108
 With the resydue and remenaunt · by the rode of Lukes,
 Ich wolle worshupe ther-with · Treuthe al my lyf,
 And be a pilgrym atte plouh · for profyt of poure and ryche.'
 Now Perkyn with the pilgrimes · to the plouh is faren; 112
 To eryen hus half-aker · holpen hym menye.
 Dykers and deluers · diggeden vp the balkes;
 Ther-with was Perkyn apayed · and paied wel here hyre.
 Other werkmen ther were · that wrouhten ful 3erne; 116
 Eche man in hus manere · made hym-self to done;
 And somme to plese Perkyn · pykede aweye the wedes.
 Atte hye pryde Peers · let the plouh stonde,
 And ouer-seyh hem hym-self · ho so best wrouhte, 120
 He sholde be hyred ther-after · when heruest-tyme come.
 Thenne seten some · and songen atten ale,
 And holpen to erie this half-acre · with 'hoy! troly! lolly!'

* Cf. C. ix. 64; p. 199. C. 103. his (*for is*) P. 111. pulgrym P. 121. wen P.

'Now, be the prince of paradys' · quath Pers tho in wraththe,
 'Bote 3e rysen the rather · and rape 3ow to worche,
 Schal no greyn that heer groweth · gladen ow at neode, 112
 And thauh 3e dyen for de-faute · the deuel haue that recche!'

Thenne weore the faytors a-ferd · and feynede hem blynde,
 And summe leiden the legges a-liri · as suche losels cunne,
 And playneden hem to pers · with suche pitouse wordes: 116
 'We haue no lymes to labore with · vr lord we hit thonken,
 Bote we preyeth for ou, Pers · and for oure plouh bothe,
 That god for his grace · oure greyn multiplie,
 And 3elde ow for oure almus · that 3e 3iuen vs here! 120
 For we mowe nouthur swynke ne swete · such seknes vs eileth.'

'Now, bi the peril of my soule!' quod Pieres · al in pure
 tene,
 'But 3e arise the rather · and rape 3ow to worche, 120
 Schal no greyne that groweth · glade 3ow at nede;
 And though 3e deye for dole · the deuel haue that reccheth!'
 Tho were faitoures aferde · and feyned hem blynde,
 Somme leyde here legges aliri · as suche loseles conneth, 124
 And made her mone to Pieres · and preyde hym of grace:
 'For we haue no lymes to laboure with · lorde, y-graced be 3e!
 Ac we preye for 3ow, Pieres · and for 3owre plow bothe,
 That god of his grace · 3owre grayne multiplie, 128
 And 3elde 3ow of 3owre almesse · that 3e 3iue vs here;
 For we may nou3te swynke ne swete · suche sikennesse vs eyleth.'
 'If it be soth,' quod Pieres, 'that 3e seyne · I shal it sone
 asspye!

3e ben wastoures, I wote wel · and Treuthe wote the sothe!
 And I am his olde hyne · and hizte hym to warne 133
 Which thei were in this worlde · his werkemen appeyred.
 3e wasten that men wynnen · with trauaille and with tene,
 Ac Treuthe shal teche 3ow · his teme to dryue, 136
 Or 3e shal ete barly bred · and of the broke drynke.
 But if he be blynde or broke-legged · or bolted with yrnas,
 He shal ete whete bred · and drynke with my-selue,
 Tyl god of his goodnesse · amendement hym sende. 140

A. 126. *Read heren (as in 60, 99); cren T; swynken V.* 133. *From T;*
V omits this line. hem; *miswritten* hym T. B. 138. (1st) or WCRO;

‘3if hit beo soth that 3e seyen,’ quod Pers · ‘sone I schal
a-spye!

3e beoth wastors, I wot · and Treuthe wot the sothe!
Icham his holde hyne · and ouzte him to warne 124
Whuche wastors in world · his werk-men destruyzen.
3e eten that thei schulden eten · that heren for vs alle;
Bote Treuthe schal techen ow · his teeme for to dryue,
Bothe to sowen and to setten · and sauen his tilthe, 128
Gaste crowen from his corn · and kepen his beestes,
Or 3e schulle ete barly bred · and of the brok drynke.
Bote heo beo blynde or broke-schonket · or bedreden liggen,
Thei schul haue as good as I · so me god helpe, 132
Til god of his grace · gare hem to arise.

Quath Peers the plouhman · al in pure tene, 124
‘Bote 3e aryse the rathere · and rape 3ow to worche,
Shal no greyn that here groweth · gladen 3ow at neede;
And thauh 3e deye for deul · the deuel haue that recche!’
Tho were faitours aferede · and feynede hem blynde, 128
And leyden here legges a-lyry · as suche lorelles conneth,
And maden here mone to Peers · how thei mowe nat worche:
‘Ac we prayeth for 3ow, Peers · and for 3oure plouh bothe,
That god for hus grace · 3oure grayn multiplie, 132
And 3elde 3ow of 3oure almesse · that 3e 3euen us here.
We may nayther swynke ne swete · suche syknesse ous ayleth;
We haue none lymes to laborie with · lord god we thonketh.’

‘3oure praiers,’ quath Peers · ‘and 3e parfit were, 136
Myght help, as ich hope; · ac hye Treuthe wolde
That no faiterye were founde · in folk that gon a-begged.
3e ben wastours, ich wot wel · that wasten and deuouren
That leel land-tylynge men · leelliche byswynken. 140
Ac Treuthe shal teche 3ow · hus teeme for to dryue,
Other 3e shulle ete barliche brede · and of the brok drynke,
Bote 3e be blynde other brokelegged · other bolted with yren.
Suche poure,’ quath Peers · ‘shullen partye with my goodes,
Bothe of my corn and of my cloth · to kepe hem fro defaute;

and L. C. 125. aryse SIM; ryse P. 127. that IMSEG; þe P. 131.
fore (2nd time) P. 132. multeplic P. 133. 3ulde P. 3eueue hus P.
140. leelleche P. 143, 144. wit P.

Ancres and hermytes · that holdeth hem in heore celles
 Schulen habben of myn almus · al the while I liue,
 I-nouh vche day at non · but no more til a morwe, 136
 Leste the fend and heore flesch · fouleden heore soules;
 Ones at noon is i-nouȝ · that no werk ne vseth,
 He abydeþ wel the bet · that bommeth not to ofte.' 139
 Thenne wastours gunne arise · and wolden han i-fouhte;

Ac ȝe myȝte trauaille as Treuthe wolde · and take mete and
 huyre
 To kepe kyne in the felde · the corne fro the bestes,
 Diken or deluen · or dyngen vpon sheues,
 Or helpe make mortar · or bere mukke a-felde. 144
 In lecherye and in losengerye · ȝe lyuen, and in sleuthe,
 And al is thorw suffrance · that veniaunce ȝow ne taketh.

Ac ancres and heremytes · that eten noȝt but at nones,
 And namore er morwe · myne almesse shul thei haue, 148
 And of my catel to cope hem with · that han cloistres and
 cherches.

Ac Robert Renne-aboute · shal nowȝte haue of myne,
 Ne posteles, but they preche conne · and haue powere of the
 bisschop;
 They shal haue payne and potage · and make hem-self at
 ese, 152
 For it is an vnresonable religioun · that hath riȝte nouȝte of
 certeyne.'

And thanne gan a wastoure to wrath hym · and wolde haue
 yfouȝte,
 And to Pieres the plowman · he profered his gloue;
 A Brytonere, a braggere · a-bosted Pieres als, 156
 And bad hym go pissen with his plow · for-pyned schrewe!
 'Wiltow or neltow · we wil haue owre wille,
 Of thi flowre and of thi flessche · fecche whan vs liketh,
 And make vs murie ther-myde · maugre thi chekes!' 160

Thanne Pieres the plowman · pleyned hym to the knyȝte,
 To kepe hym, as couenaunte was · fram cursed shrewes,
 And fro this wastoures wolueskynnes · that maketh the worlde
 dere:

To Pers the plouh-mon · one profrede his gloue,
 A Brutiner, a braggere · a-bostede him else,
 And bad go pisse him with his plouh · pilledede schrewe! 143
 'For we wolen habbe of thi flour · wol thou so nulle thou,
 And of thi flesch fecche · whon that vs lyketh,
 And make vs merye therwith · maugre thi chekes!'

Thenne Pers plouh-mon · playnede him to the kniht,
 To kepen him, as couenaunt was · from cursede schrewes, 148
 From wastors that wayten · winners to schende.

Ancres and heremites · that eten bote at nones, 146
 And freres that flateren nat · and poure folke syke,
 What! ich and myne · wolles fynde hem that hem needeth.'

Thenne gan Wastour to wratth · and wolde haue fouhten, 149
 And to Peers plouhman · proferede to fighte,

And bad hym 'go pisse with hus plouh · peyuesshe shrewe!'
 A Brytonere com braggynge · a-bosted Peers al-so; 152
 'Wolle thou, ne wolle thou · we wolles habbe oure wil,
 Bothe thy flour and thy flessh · fecchen when ous lyketh,
 And make ous myrye ther-myd · maugre ho bygruccheth!'

Peers the plouhman tho · pleynede to the knyght, 156
 To kepe hym and hus catel · as couenaunt was bytwyne hem:
 'Awreke me of these wastours · that maken thys worlde dere;

Curteisliche the kniht · as his kuynde wolde,
 Warnede wastors · and wissede hem do betere; 151
 ‘Or ȝe schul a-bugge hit bi the lawe · bi the ordre that I bere!’
 ‘I was not wont to worche,’ quod a wastour · ‘ȝit wol I not
 biginne!’—

And lette luytel of the lawe · and lasse of the kniht,
 And countede Pers at a peose · and his plouh bothe, 155
 And manasede him and his men · whon that thei next metten.
 ‘Nou be the peril of my soule,’ · quath Pers the plouh-mon,
 I schal a-peiren ow alle · for oure proude wordes!’
 And hoped aftur Hunger tho · that herde him atte furste: 159

‘For tho waste and wynnen nouȝte · and that ilke while 164
 Worth neuere plente amonge the poeple · ther-while my plow
 liggeth.’

Curteisly the knyȝte thanne · as his kynde wolde,
 Warned Wastoure · and wissed hym bettere, 167
 ‘Or thow shalt abugge by the lawe · by the ordre that I bere!’
 ‘I was nouȝt wont to worche,’ quod Wastour · ‘and now
 wil I nouȝt bigynne!’—

And lete lizte of the lawe · and lasse of the knyȝte,
 And sette Pieres at a pees · and his plow bothe,
 And manaced Pieres and his men · ȝif thei mette eft sone. 172
 ‘Now, by the peril of my soule!’ quod Pieres · ‘I shal
 apeyre ȝow alle!’
 And houped after Hunger · that herd hym atte firste:
 ‘A-wreke me of thise wastoures,’ quod he · ‘that this worlde
 schendeth!’

Hunger in haste tho · hent Wastour bi the mawe, 176
 And wronge hym so bi the wombe · that bothe his eyen wattered;
 He buffeted the Britoner · aboute the chekes,
 That he loked like a lanterne · al his lyf after.
 He bette hem so bothe · he barste nere here guttes; 180
 Ne hadde Pieres with a pese-lof · preyed Hunger to cesse,
 They hadde ben doluen bothe · ne deme thow non other.
 ‘Suffre hem lyue,’ he seyde · ‘and lete hem ete with hogges,

A. 152. (158) the THU; V om.
 read wastor. 163. See l. 142.

161. wastour THU; wastors V;
 bretoner TH; brytoner U; boye V.

'A-wrek me on this wastors,' quod Pers · 'that this world
schendeth !' 160

Hongur in haste · hente Wastor bi the mawe,
And wrong him so be the wombe · that bothe his ezen watreden,
And buffeted the Brutiner · aboute bothe his chekes;
He lokede lyk a lanterne · al his lyf after. 164
He beot so the boyes · he barst neih heore ribbes,
Nedde Pers with a peose-lof · i-preyed him to leue;
And with a benene bat · i-bot hem by-twene,
And hutte Hongur ther-with · a-midde bothe his lippes, 168
And he bledde in-to the bodiward · a bolleful of gruwel;
Nedde the fisicien furst · defendet him water

Thei counte nat of cursyng · ne holy kirke dreden;
Ther worth no plente,' quath Peers · 'and the plouh ligge.'
Curtesliche the knyght then · as hus kynde wolde, 161
Warned Wastour · and wissede hym betere,
'Other ich shal bete the by the law · and brynge the in stockes.'
'Ich was nat woned to wirche,' quath Wastour · 'and ich wolle
nat now bygynne,' 164

And let lyght of the lawe · and lasse of the knyght,
And sette Peers at a pese · pleyne hym wher he wolde.
'Now, by Crist,' quath Peers · 'y shal apeyre 3ow alle !'
And hopede after Hunger · that herde him at the ferste. 168
'Ich praye the,' quath Peers tho · 'pur charite, sire Honger,
Awreke me of these wastours · for the knyght wol nat.'

Honger hente in haste · Wastour by the mawe,
And wrang hym by the wombe · that al waterede hus eyen.
He buffated the Brutener · a-boute the chekes, 173
That he loked lyk a lanterne · al hus lyf after.
He bet hem so bothe · he barst neih hure guttes,
Ne hadde Peers with a peese-lof · prayede hym by-leue. 176
'Honger, haue mercy of hem,' quath Peers · 'and let me 3eue
hem benes;

And that was bake for Bayarde · may be here tote.'

C. 159. kirke I; church PES. 160. pleynte P. 164. wond P. to IMSG;
P om. 166. wer P. 168. him IMSG; P om. 170. peese P. 176. wit P.
178. bayerde P.

To abate the barli-bred · and the benes i-grounde,
Thei hedden beo ded bi this day · and doluen al warm. 172

Thenne faytors for fere · flowen to bernas,
And flapten on with fleiles · from morwe til euen,
That Honger nas not hardi · vp for to loke,
For a potful of peosun · that Pers hedde i-mad. 176
An hep of hermytes · henten heom spades,
And doluen drit and donge · to dutte Honger oute.
Blynde and bedraden · weore botned a thousent,

Or elles benes and bren · ybaken togideres, 184
Or elles melke and mene ale' · thus preyed Pieres for hem.

Faitoures for fere her-of · flowen in-to bernas,
And flapten on with flayles · fram morwe til euen,
That Hunger was nouzt so hardy · on hem for to loke, 188
For a potful of peses · that Peres hadde ymaked.
An heep of heremites · henten hem spades,
And ketten here copes · and courtpies hem made,
And wenten as werkemen · with spades and with schoueles, 192
And doluen and dykeden · to dryue aweye hunger.

Blynde and bedreden · were botened a thousande,
That seten to begge syluer · sone were thei heled.

For that was bake for Bayarde · was bote for many hungry, 196
And many a beggere for benes · buxome was to swynke,
And eche a pore man wel apayed · to haue pesen for his huyre,
And what Pieres preyed hem to do · as prest as a sperhauke.

And there-of was Peres proude · and put hem to werke, 200
And 3af hem mete as he myzte aforth · and mesurable huyre.

A. 186. Al THU; V *om.*
coppes P. 187. P *om.* hunger.

C. 180. whit P.
189. wit P.

185. copes EIMS;
191. of ESG; and P.

That lyzen for blynde · and for broke-legget 180
 Vppon softe Sonenday · bi the heize weye ;
 Hungur hem helede · with an hot cake.

Lome mennes limes · weore lythet that tyme,
 And bi-come knaues · to kepe Pers beestes, 184
 And preyeden for charite · with Pers for to dwelle,
 Al for couetyse of his corn · to caste a-wey Hunger.

Pers was proud ther-of · and put hem in offys,
 And ȝaf hem mete and moneye · as thei mihte deseruen. 188

Tho were faitours a-fered · and flowen to Peersses bernas,
 And flapten on with flailes · fro morwe til euene, 183
 That Honger was nat hardy · on hem for to loke,
 For a potful of potage · that Peersses wyf made.

An hep of eremites · henten hem spades,
 Spitten and spradde donge · in despit of Hunger. 184

Thei coruen here copes · and courtepies hem made,
 And wenten as workmen · to weden and mowen ;
 Al for drede of here deth · suche dyntes ȝaf Hunger.

Blynde and brokeleggede · he botnede a thousande, 188
 And lame men he lechede · with longen of bestes.

Preestes and other peple · to Peers thei drowen,
 And freres of alle fyue ordres · al for fere of Hunger.
 For that that was bake for Bayarde · was bote for menye hungry,
 Drosenes and dregges · drynke for menye beggeres. 193

Ther was no lad that lyuede · that ne lowede hym to Peers,
 To be hus hole hewe · thauh he hadde no more
 Bute lyf-lode for hus labour · and hus lone at nones. 196

Tho was Peers ful proude · and putte hem alle to werke,
 In daubyng and in deluyng · in donge a-feld berynge,
 In thresshyng, in thecchyng · in thwytyng of pyntes,
 And alle kynne trewe craft · that man couthe deuyse. 200

Was no beggere so bolde · bote-yf he blynde were,
 That dorst with-sitte that Peeres seyde · for fere of syre Hunger.
 And Peers was proud ther-of · and putte hem alle to swynke,
 And ȝaf hem mete and monye · as they myght deseruen. 204

193. drenke P.
 hyne EMSG.

194. P om. no ; see l. 201.
 202. wit-sitte P.

195. hewe I ; hywe P ;

203. swynge P.

Thenne hedde Peers pite · and preiede Hunger to wende
Hom to his ounne hurde · and holden him ther for euere.

‘And ȝit I preye the,’ quod Pers · ‘er thou passe henne,
Of bidders and of beggers · what is best to done? 192
I wot wel whon thou art i-went · thei wol worchen ful ille;
And mischef hit maketh · thei beoth so meke nouthe,
And for de-faute of foode · thus faste thei worchen;
And heo beoth my blodi bretheren · for god bouȝte vs alle. 196
Treuthe tauhte me ones · to louen hem vchone,
And helpen hem of alle thyng · aftur that hem neodeth.
ȝit wolde I witen ȝif thou wustest · what were the beste,

Thanne hadde Peres pite · and preyed Hunger to wende
Home in-to his owne erde · and holden hym there.

‘For I am wel awroke now · of wastoures, thorw thi myȝte. 204
Ac I preye the, ar thou passe’ · quod Pieres to Hunger,
‘Of beggeres and of bidderes · what best be to done?
For I wote wel, be thou went · thei wil worche ful ille;
For myschief it maketh · thei beth so meke nouthe, 208
And for defaute of her fode · this folke is at my wille.

They are my bloody bretheren,’ quod Pieres · ‘for god bouȝte
vs alle;

Treuthe tauȝte me ones · to louye hem vchone,
And to helpen hem of alle thinge · ay as hem nedeth. 212
And now wolde I witen of the · what were the best,
And how I myȝte amaistrien hem · and make hem to worche.’

‘Here now,’ quod Hunger · ‘and holde it for a wisdome:
Bolde beggeres and bigge · that mowe her bred biswynke, 216
With houndes bred and hors bred · holde vp her hertis,
Abate hem with benes · for bollyng of her wombe;
And ȝif the gomes grucche · bidde hem go swynke,
And he shal soupe swettere · whan he it hath deseruid. 220

And if thou fynde any freke · that fortune hath appeyred,
Or any maner fals men · fonde thou suche to cnowe;
Conforte hem with thi catel · for Crystes loue of heuene,

B. 206. to WCRO; L *om.* 214. An (*for* And) L. 223. hem RO;
hym LW. C. 206. in IMSEG; on P. 216. wit P. 217. ben EM;

And hou I mihte a-maystren hem · and maken hem to worche.'

'Here nou,' quod Hunger · 'and holde hit for wisdam, 201
Bolde bidders and beggers · that mowen her mete biswinke,
With houndes bred and horse bred · hold vp heor hertes,
And bamme hem with bones · for bollyng of heore wombes;
And 3if the gomes grucchen · bidde hem go swynke, 205
And thei schule soupe the swettore · whon thei han hit deseruet.
And 3if thou fyndest eny freik · that fortune hath a-peiret
With fuir, or with fals folk · fonde suche to knowe; 208
Cumforte hem with thi catel · for Cristes loue of heuene,

Tho hadde Peers pite · of alle poure puple,
And bad Hunger in haste · hyhe out of contre
Home in-to his owen erthe · and halde hym ther euere—
'For ich am wel awreke · of wastours thorw thy myghte. 208
Ac ich praye the,' quath Peers · 'Hunger, er thou wende,
Of beggers and of bydders · what best be to done?
For ich wot wel, be thou went · worche thei wolle ful ylle;
Meschief hit maketh · thei ben so meke nouthe, 212
And for defaute this folke · folwen my hestes.
Hit is no thyng for loue · thei labour thus faste,
Bote for fere of famyn · in faith,' seide Peers;
'Ys no final loue with this folke · for al here faire speche; 216
And hit ben my blody brothren · for god bouhte vs alle.
Treuthe tauhte me ones · to louye hem echone,
And helpen hem of alle thyng · ay as hem nedeth.
Now wolde ich wite, or thou wentest · what were the beste,
How ich myghte a-maistren hem · to louye and laboure 221
For here lyfode; · lere me, syre Hunger.'

'Now herkne,' quath Hunger · 'and hold hit for a wysdome;
Bolde beggeres and bygge · that mowe here bred byswynke,
With houndes bred and hors bred · hele hem when thei hungren,
And a-bane hem with benes · for bollynge of here wombe.
And yf the gromes grucche · bid hem go swynke,
And he shal soupe the swettere · when he hath deserued. 228
And yf thou fynde eny folke · wham false men han apaired,
Comforte hem with thy catel · for so comaundeth treuthe;

Loue hem, and lene hem · so the lawe of kuynde wole.
 And alle manere of men · that thou mayzt aspye,
 That neodi ben, or naket · and nouzt haue to spende, 212
 With mete or with moneye · mak hem fare the betere,
 Or with word or with werk · while that thou art here.
 Mak the frendes ther-with · for so seint Matheu techeth,
Facile vobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis.
 ‘I wolde not greue god,’ quod Pers · ‘for al the gold on
 ground; 216
 Miht I sunneles don as thou seist?’ · seide Pers thenne.

Loue hem and lene hem · so lawe of god techeth:— 224
Alter alterius onera portate.
 And alle maner of men · that thow myzte asspye,
 That nedy ben, and nauzty · helpe hem with thi godis,
 Loue hem and lakke hem nouzte · late god take the veniaunce;
 Theigh thei done yuel · late thow god y-worthe:— 228
Michi vindictam, et ego retribuam.

And if thow wilt be graciouse to god · do as the gospel techeth,
 And biloue the amonges low men · so shaltow lacche grace,
Facile vobis amicos de mamona iniquitatis.
 ‘I wolde nouzt greue god,’ quod Piers · ‘for al the good on
 grounde;
 Mizte I synnelees do as thow seist?’ · seyde Pieres thanne. 232
 ‘3e, I bihote the,’ quod Hunger · ‘or ellis the bible lieth;
 Go to Genesis the gyaunt · the engendroure of vs alle;
 ‘*In sudore* and swynke · thow shalt thi mete tilye,
 And laboure for thi lyflode’ · and so owre lorde hyzte. 236
 And Sapience seyth the same · I seigh it in the bible;
 ‘*Piger pro frigore* · no felde nolde tilye,
 And therefore he shal begge and bidde · and no man bete his
 hunger.’

Mathew with mannes face · mouthed thise wordes, 240
 That *seruus nequam* had a nam · and for he wolde nouzte
 chaffare,
 He had maugre of his maistre · for euermore after;

'ȝe, I be-hote the,' quod Hunger · 'or elles the bible lyȝeth;
Go to Genesis the Ieaunt · engendrure of vs alle;

In sudore and swynk · thou schalt thi mete tilie, 220

And labre for thi lyflode' · for so vr lord hiȝte.

And Sapiens seith the same · I saih hit in the bible;

'*Piger propter frigus* · no feld nolde he tilie,

He schal go bidde and begge · and no mon beete his hunger.'

Matheu the monnes face · he mommeth theose wordes, 225

'*Serius nequam* hedde nprnam · and for he nolde hit vsen,

He hedde maugre of his maister · euere more aftur;

Auferte ab illo mnam, et date illi, etc.

Loue hem and lene hem · so lawe of kynde wolde;

Alter alterius onera portate.

And alle manere men · that thou myght aspye 232

In meschief other in mal-ese · and thou mowe hem helpe,

Loke by thy lyf · let hem nouht for-fare.

Yf thou hast wonne ouht wickeliche · wisliche dispende hit;

Facite uobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis.'

'Ich wolde nat greuye God,' quath Peers · 'for al the good
on erthe; 236

Myghte ich synneles do as thou seist?' · seide Peers plouhman.

'ȝe, ich by-hote the,' quath Hunger · 'other elles the byble lyeth;

Go to oure by-gynnyng · tho god the worlde made,

As wise men han ywryte · and as wittnesseth *genesis*, 240

That seith, with swynke and with swot · and swetyng face

By-tulye and by-trauaile · treuly oure lyf-lode;

In labore et sudore uultus tui uesceris pane tuo.

And Salamon the sage · with the same acordeth,

The slowe caytyf for colde · wolde no corn tulye; 244

In somere for hus slewthe · he shal haue defaute,

And gon abrybeth and beggen · and no man bete hus hunger.

*Piger propter frigus noluit arare; mendicabit in hyeme et
non dabitur ei.*

Matheu maketh mencion · of a man that lente

Hus seluer to thre manere men · and menyng that thei sholde

Chaffare and cheeue ther-with · in chele and in hete; 249

And he that best laborede · best was alowed,

And leders for here laboryng · ouere al the lordes goodes.

He bi-nom him his npnam · for he nolde not worche, 228
 And ȝaf hit him in haste · that hedde ten bi-fore;
 And seththen he thus seide · his seruauns hit herden,
 He that hath schal haue · to helpe ther need is,
 And he that nouȝt hath, nouȝt schal haue · ne no mon him
 helpe; 232
 And he that hopeth forte haue · hit him beo bi-reuet.
 For Kuynde Wit wolde · that vche mon wrouhte
 With techinge or with tilynge · or trauaylynge of hondes,
 Actyf lyf or contemplatyf · Crist wolde hit else. 236
 For so seith the sauter · in psalm of *beati omnes*,

And binam hym his mnam · for he ne wolde worche,
 And ȝaf that mnam to hym · that ten mnames hadde, 244
 And with that he seyde · that holicherche it herde,
 ‘He that hath shal haue · and helpe there it nedeth,
 And he that nouȝt hath, shal nouȝt haue · and no man hym
 helpe;
 And that he weneth wel to haue · I wil it hym bireue.’ 248
 Kynde witt wolde · that eche a wyght wrouȝte
 Or in dykyng or in deluyng · or trauaillynge in preyeres,
 Contemplatyf lyf or actyf lyf · Cryst wolde men wrouȝte.
 The sauter seyth in the psalme · of *beati omnes*, 252
 The freke that fedeth hym-self · with his feythful laboure,
 He is blessed by the boke · in body and in soule:
Labores manuum tuarum, etc.’

‘Ȝet I prey ȝow,’ quod Pieres · ‘*par charite*, and ȝe kunne
 Eny leef of lechecraft · lere it me, my dere. 256
 For somme of my seruauntz · and my-self bothe
 Of al a wyke worche nouȝt · so owre wombe aketh.’
 ‘I wote wel,’ quod Hunger · ‘what sykenesse ȝow eyleth,
 Ȝe han maunged ouer-moche · and that maketh ȝow grone. 260
 Ac I hote the,’ quod Hunger · ‘as thow thyne hele wilnest,
 That thow drynke no day · ar thow dyne somewhat.

Labores manuum tuarum quia manducabis, etc.

He that get his fode her · with trauaylinge in treuthe,
 God 3iueþ him his blessyng · that his lyflode so swynketh.
 ‘Yit I preye the,’ quod Pers · ‘par charite, 3if thou conne 240
 Eny lyf of leche-craft · lere hit me, my deore.

For summe of my seruauns · beoth seke other-while,
 Of alle the wike heo worcheth not · so heor wombe aketh.’

‘I wot wel,’ quod Hungur · ‘what seknesse hem eileth, 244
 Thei han i-maunget ouur muche · that maketh hem grone ofte.
 Ac ich hote the,’ quod Hungur · ‘and thou thin hele wylne,
 That thou drynke no dai · til thou haue dynet sumwhat;

Ac he that was a wrecche · and wolde nat trauayle, 252
 The lord, for hus lacchesse · and hus luther sleuthe,
 By-nom hym al that he hadde · and 3af hit to hus felawe
 That leely hadde labored; · and thenne the lord seide,

‘He that hath shal haue · and helpe ther hym lyketh; 256
 And he that nauht haueth · he shal nauht haue,
 And no man 3ut helpe hym; · and that he weneth haue,
 Ich wolle hit hym by-reue · for hus rechelesnesse.’

Lo! what the sauter seith · to swynkers with handes, 260
 ‘Yblessed be alle tho · that here by-lyue byswynken
 Thorw eny leel labour · as thorgh lymes and handes;’

*Labores manuum tuarum quia manducabis; beatus es, et
 bene tibi erit: et cetera.*

These aren euydences,’ quath Hunger · ‘for hem that wolle
 nat swynken,

That here lyflode be lene · and lytel worth here clothes.’ 264
 ‘By Cryst,’ quath Peers the plouhman tho · ‘these prouerbes
 wolle ich shewe

To beggers, and to boyes · that loth ben to worche.
 Ac 3ut ich praye 3ow,’ quath Peers · ‘pur charity, syre Hunger,
 3yf 3e can other knowe · eny kynne thyng of fysyk? 268

For some of my seruauns · and my-selue bothe,
 Of alle a woke worchen nat · so oure wombe groneth.’

‘Ich wot wel,’ quath Hunger · ‘what syknesse 3ow aileth;
 3e haue manged ouere muche · that maketh 3ow be syke. 272

C. 261. here IG; he (*wrongly*) P. byswynken EMG; swynken P. 262.
beatus—et cetera is in S only. 263, 265. These P.

Ete not, ich hote the · til hunger the take, 248
 And sende the sum of his sauce · to sauer the the betere;
 Keep sum til soper tyme · and sit thou not to longe,
 A-rys vp ar appetyt · habbe i-3eten his fulle.

Let not sir Surfet · sitten at thi bord; 252
 Loue him not, for he is a lechour · and likerous of tonge,
 And aftur mony metes · his mawe is a-longet.
 And 3if thou di3ete the thus · I dar legge bothe myn eres,

Ete nou3te, I hote the · ar hunger the take,
 And sende the of his sauce · to sauoure with thi lippes; 264
 And kepe some tyl soper-tyme · and sitte nou3t to longe,
 Arise vp ar appetit · haue eten his fulle.
 Lat nou3t sire Surfait · sitten at thi borde;
 Leue him nou3t, for he is lecherous · and likerous of tonge, 268
 And after many manere metes · his maw is afyngred.

And 3if thou diete the thus · I dar legge myne eres,
 That Phisik shal his furred hodes · for his fode selle,
 And his cloke of Calabre · with alle the knappes of golde, 272
 And be fayne, bi my feith · his phisik to lete,
 And lerne to laboure with londe · for lyflode is swete;
 For morthereres aren mony leches · lorde hem amende!
 Thei do men deye thorw here drynkes · ar destinē it wolde.' 276
 'By seynt Poule,' quod Pieres · 'thise aren profitable wordis!
 Wende now, Hunger, whan thou wolt · that wel be thou euere
 For this is a louely lessoun · lorde it the for-3elde!'

A. 250. sit TU; faste VH. 256. foode THU; lyflode V. C. 274.
 the IMG; P om. 276. *This line is from* MIG; P om. 286. wit P.
 295. to IM; P om. 300. wenne P.

That Fisyk schal his forred hod · for his foode sulle, 256
 And eke his cloke of Calabre · with knappes of gold,
 And beo fayn, be my feith · his fisyk to lete,
 And leorne to labre with lond · leste lyflode faile;
 Ther beoth mo lyzers then leches · vr lord hem amende! 260
 Thei don men dyzen thoruz heor drinke · er destenye wolde.'
 'Bi seint Poull' quod Pers · 'theos beoth prophitable wordes!
 This is a loueli lesson · vr lord hit the for-ȝelde!
 Wend nou whon thi wille is · wel the beo for euere!' 264

Ac eet nat, ich hote · or hunger the take,
 And sende the of hus sauce · to sauerie with thi lippes.
 And kep som til soper-tyme · and sitte nauht to longe
 At noon, ne at no time; · and nameliche at soper 276
 Let nat syre Sorfait · sitten at thy borde,
 And loke thow drynke no day · er thou dyne som-what.
 Thenk that *Diues* for hus delicat lyf · to the deuel wente,
 And Lazar, the lene beggere · that longed after cromes— 280
 And ȝut had he hem nat · for ich Hunger culde hym—
 And sitthe ich sauh hym sitte · as he a syre were,
 At alle manere ese · in Abrahammes lappe.
 And yf thow be of power · Peers, ich the rede, 284
 Alle that greden at thy gate · for godes loue, after fode,
 Parte with hem of thy payn · of potage other of souel,
 Lene hem som of thy loof · thauh thou the lasse chewe.
 And thauh lyers and lacchedrawers · and lolleres knocke, 288
 Let hem abyde tyl the bord be drawe · ac bere hem none cromes,
 Til alle thyn nedy neihebores · haue none ymaked.

And yf thow dyght the thus · ich dar legge myn eres,
 That Fisyk shal hus forrede hodes · for hus fode sulle, 292
 And hus cloke of Calabre · for hus comunes legge,
 And be fayn, by my faith · his fisyk to lete,
 And lerne to labore with londe · leste lyflode hym faile.
 Ther aren meny luthere leches · and leele leches fewe, 296
 Thei don men deye thorgh here drynkes · er destyne hit wolde.'
 'By seynt Paul,' quath Peers tho · 'thou poyntest neih the
 treuthe,
 And leelly seist, as ich leue · lord the for-ȝelde!
 Wend now whenne thou wolt · and wel be thow euere, 300
 For thow hast wel ywroke me · and also wel ytauht me.'

'I beo-hote the,' quod Hungur · 'heonnes nul I wende
Er I haue i-dynet bi this day · and i-dronke bothe.'

'I haue no peny,' quod Pers · 'poletes to bugge,
Nouther gees ne grys · bote twey grene cheeses, 268
And a fewe cruddes and craym · and a therf cake,
And a lof of benes and bren · i-bake for my children.
And I sigge, bi my soule · I haue no salt bacon,
Ne no cokeneyes, bi Crist · colopus to maken. 272
Bot I haue porettes and percyl · and moni colplontes,
And eke a cou, and a calf · and a cart-mare
To drawe a-feld my donge · whil the drouhthe lasteth.
Bi this lyflode I mot lyuen · til Lammasse tyme; 276
Bi that, ich hope forte haue · heruest in my croft;
Thenne may I dihte thi dyner · as the deore lyketh.'

'By-hote god,' quod Hunger · 'hennes ne wil I wende, 280
Til I haue dyned bi this day · and ydronke bothe.'

'I haue no peny,' quod Peres · 'poletes forto bigge,
Ne neyther gees ne grys · but two grene cheses,
A fewe cruddes and creem · and an hauer cake, 284
And two loues of benes and bran · y-bake for my fauntis.
And 3et I sey, by my soule · I haue no salt bacoun,
Ne no kokeney, bi Cryst · coloppes forto maken.
Ac I haue percil and porettes · and many kole-plantas, 288
And eke a cow and a calf · and a cart-mare
To drawe a-felde my donge · the while the drought lasteth.
And bi this lyflode we mot lyue · til Lammasse tyme;
And bi that, I hope to haue · heruest in my croft; 292
And thanne may I dizte thi dyner · as me dere liketh.'
Alle the pore peple tho · pesecoddes fetten,
Benes and baken apples · thei brouzte in her lappes,
Chibolles and cheruelles · and ripe chiries manye, 296
And profred Peres this present · to plesse with hunger.

Al Hunger eet in hast · and axed after more.
Thanne pore folke for fere · fedde Hunger 3erne
With grene poret and pesen · to poysoun Hunger thei thouzte.
By that it neighed nere heruest · newe corne cam to chepynge;
Thanne was folke fayne · and fedde Hunger with the best, 302
With good ale, as Glotoun tauzte · and gerte Hunger go slepe.

And tho wolde Wastour nouzt werche · but wandren aboute,

Al the pore peple · pese-coddes fetten,
 Bake benes in bred · thei brouhten in heor lappes, 280
 Chibolles, cheef mete · and ripe chiries monye,
 And proferde Pers this present · to plesse with hungur.

Honger eet this in haste · and asked aftur more.
 Thenne this folk for fere · fetten him monye 284
 Porettes, and peosen · for thei him plesse wolden;
 From that tyme that thulke weore eten · take he schulde his leue
 Til hit to heruest hizede · that newe corn com to chepyng.

Thenne was that folk fayn · and fedde Hunger ȝeorne 288
 With good ale, and glotonye · and gart him to slepe.
 And tho nolde the wastor worche · but wandren aboute,

‘Ich by-hote the,’ quath Hunger · ‘that hennes nel ich wende
 Er ich haue y-dyned by thys day · and y-dronke bothe!’

‘Ich haue no peny,’ quath Peers · ‘polettes for to bigge, 304
 Nother goos nother grys · bote two grene cheses,
 A fewe croddes and creyme · and a cake of otes,
 And bred for my barnes · of benes and of peses.
 And ȝut ich sey, by my saule · ich haue no salt bacon; 308
 Nouht a cokeney, by Cryst · colhoppes to make.

Ac ich haue porett-plontes · perselye and scalones,
 Chiboles and chiruylls · and chiries sam-rede,
 And a cow with a calf · and a cart-mare, 312
 To drawe a-feld my donge · the whyle drouth lasteth.
 By this lyflode we mote lyue · tyl Lammasse tyme;
 And by that, ich hope to haue · heruest in my crofte;
 Thenne may I dyghte thy dyner · as me dere lyketh.’ 316

Alle the poure puple tho · peescoddes fetten;
 Benes and baken apples · thei brouhte in here lappes,
 And profrede Peers this present · to plesse ther-with Hunger.

Hunger eet al in haste · and askede after more; 320
 Poure folke for fere tho · fedde Hunger ȝerne
 With creym and with croddes · with cارس and other herbes.
 By that yt neiherd heruest · and newe corn com to chepyng,
 Thenne was this folke feyn · and fedde Hunger deynteuousliche,
 And Gloton tho with good ale · gerte Hunger to slepe. 325
 Tho wolde Wastour nat worche · bote wandrede aboute,

That he was werkmon i-wrouȝt · warie the tyme,
And corse ȝerne the kyng · and al his counseil aftur,
Suche lawes to loke · laborers to chaste.

Ac while Hunger was mayster heer · wolde ther non chyde,
Ne striue aȝeyn the statutes · so steorneliche he lokede. 305

I warne ȝou, alle werk-men · winneth while ȝe mowe,
Hunger hiderward aȝeyn · hiȝeth him ȝeorne.

He wole a-wake thorw watur · the wastours alle; 308
Er fyue ȝer ben folfult · such famyn schal a-ryse,
Thorw flodes and foul weder · fruites schul fayle;
And so seith Saturne · and sent vs to warne. 311

Nother beggere eete bred · that benes were ynne,
Bote clerematyn and coket · and of clene whete; 328
Thei wolde non halpeny ale · in none wyse drynke,
Bote of the best and brounest · that brewesters sellen.

Laboreres that han no londe · to lyuen on bote here handes
Deyned noght to dyne a-day · nyght-olde wortes. 332

May no peny-ale hem paye · ne a pece of bacon,
Bote hit be freesch fleesch other fysch · fried other ybake,
And that *chaud* and *pluschaud* · for chillyng of here mawe.

Bote he be heyliche yhyred · elles wol he chide, 336
That he was a werkman ywroght · waryen the tyme;
Corteis Catones consail · comseth he by-grucche,
Paupertatis onus · patienter ferre memento.

And thenne he corseth the kyng · and alle the kynges Iustices,
Suche lawes to lere · laborers to greue. 341
Ac while Hunger was here mayster · wolde non chide,

Ne stryue a-ȝens the statute · he lokede so sturne.

Ac ich warne ȝow werkmen · wynne whyle ȝe mowe, 344
For Hunger hyderwardes · hyeth hym faste;
He shal awake thorw water · wasters to chaste.
Ar fewe ȝeres be fulfilled · famyne shal aryse,

And so seith *Saturnus* · and sent ȝow to warne. 348

[*Not in A-text.*]

Whan ȝe se the sonne amys · and two monkes hedes, 328
And a mayde haue the maistrie · and multiplie bi eight, .
Thanne shal Deth withdrawe · and Derthe be iustice,
And Dawe the dyker · deye for hunger,
But if god of his goodnesse · graunt vs a trewe. 332

[*Not in A-text.*]

Thorwe flodes and foule wederes · frutes shullen faile,
 Pruyde and pestilences · shal muche puple fecche.
 Thre shupes and a shaft · with an vm. folwyng,
 Shal brynge bane and bataile · on bothe half the mone. 352
 And thanne shal deth with-drawe · and derthe be Iustice,
 And Dawe the deluere · deye for defaute,
 Bote god of hus goodnesse · graunte ous a trewe. 355

Hic explicit passus nonus.

C. 350. pestelences P.

351. viij (*for vm*) I.

PASSUS VIII.

Passus octauus de visione, vt prius.

TREUTHE herde telle her-of · and to Pers sende,
 To taken his teeme · and tilyen the eorthe;
 And purchasede him a pardoun · *a pena et a culpa*
 For him, and for his heires · euer-more aftur. 4
 And bad holden hem at hom · and heren heore ley3es,
 And al that euere hulpen him · to heren or to sowen,
 Or eny maner mester · that mihte Pers helpen,

PASSUS VII.

Passus vij. de visione, vt supra.

TREUTHE herde telle her-of · and to Peres he sent,
 To taken his teme · and tulyen the erthe,
 And purchaced hym a pardoun · *a pena et a culpa*
 For hym, and for his heires · for euermore after. 4
 And bad hym holde hym at home · and eryen his leyes,
 And alle that halpe hym to erie · to sette or to sowe,
 Or any other myster · that my3te Pieres auaille,
 Pardoun with Pieres plowman · treuthe hath ygraunted. 8
 Kynges and kny3tes · that kepen holycherche,
 And ry3tfullych in reumes · reulen the peple,
 Han pardoun thourgh purgatorie · to passe ful lyztly,
 With patriarkes and prophetes · in paradise to be felawes. 12
 Bisshopes yblessed · 3if thei ben as thei shulden,
 Legistres of bothe the lawes · the lewed there-with to preche,
 And in as moche as thei mowe · amende alle synful,
 Aren peres with the apostles · this pardoun Piers sheweth, 16
 And at the day of dome · atte heigh deyse to sytte.

B. 16. this WCO; thus LR. C. 5. hym IG; P om. 7. myster
 MEG; meester P. 9. kirke I; churche PEG. 10. ryghtfulleche P.
 18. custymes P.

Part in that pardoun · the pope hath i-graunted. 8

Kynges and knihtes · that kepen holi churchē,
And rihtfuliche rulen · the reame and the peple,
Han pardoun thorw purgatorie · to passen ful sone,
With patriarkes in paradys · to pleyen ther-aftur. 12

Busschops that blessen · and bothe the lawes cunnen,
Loketh on that on lawe · and lereth men that other,
And bereth hem bothe on heore bac · as heore baner scheweth,
And precheth heore persouns · the peril of sunne, 16
Hou heore schabbede schep · schal heore wolle saue,
Han pardoun with the apostles · whon thei passen hennes,
And atte day of dom · with hem on deis setten.

PASSUS X.

Incipit passus decimus.

TREUTHE herde telle here-of · and to Peers sente
To take hus teeme · and tulye the erthe;
And purchased hym a pardon · *à pena et à culpa*,
For hym and for hus heyres · for euere to be asoiled; 4
And bad hym halde hym at home · and erylle hus leyes,
And alle that hulpe hym to erylle · to setten other to sawe,
Other eny manere myster · that myght Peers a-vayle,
Pardon with Peers plouhman · perpetual he graunteth. 8

Kynges and knyghtes · that holy kirke defenden,
And ryghtfulliche in reames · ruelen the comune,
Han pardon thorw purgatorie · to passy ful lyghtliche,
With patriarkes and prophetes · in paradyse to sitte. 12

Bisshopes yblessed · if thei ben as thei sholde,
Leel and ful of loue · and no lord dreden,
Merciable to meek · and mylde to the goode,
And bytynge on badde men · bote yf thei wolde amende, 16
And dredeth nat for no deth · to distruye, by here powere,
Lecherie a-mong lordes · and hure luther customes,
And sitthen lyue as thei lereth men · oure lord treuthe hem
graunteth

To be peeres to a-posteles · alle puple to ruele, 20
And deme with hem at domes day · bothe quike and ded.

Marchauns in this margin · hedden mony 3eres, 20
 Bote non *a pena et a culpa* · the pope nolde hem graunte,
 For thei holdeth not heore haly-day · as holy churche techeth,
 And for thei sworn bi heore soule · —‘so god hem moste
 helpe!’—

A3eyn heore clene concience · heore catel to sulle. 24

Bote vndur his secre seal · Treuthe sende a lettre,
 And bad hem bugge boldely · what hem best lykede,
 And seththen sullen hit a-3eyn · and saue the wynnynge,
 And make *meson-deux* ther-with · meseyse to helpe, 28
 And wikkede wones · wihtly to amende;
 Beete brugges a-boute · that to-broke were,
 Marie maydens · or maken hem nonnes;
 Pore widewes that wolde beo · none wyues aftur, 32

Marchauntz in the margyne · hadden many 3eres,
 Ac none *a pena et a culpa* · the pope nolde hem graunte,
 For thei holde nouzt her halidayes · as holicherche techeth, 20
 And for thei swere by her soule · and ‘so god moste hem
 helpe,’

A3ein clene conscience · her catel to selle.

Ac vnder his secret seel · Treuthe sent hem a lettre,
 That they shulde bugge boldely · that hem best liked, 24
 And sithenes selle it a3ein · and saue the wynnynge,
 And amende *mesondieux* there-myde · and myseyse folke helpe,
 And wikked wayes · wiztlich hem amende;
 And do bote to brugges · that to-broke were, 28
 Marien maydenes · or maken hem nonnes;
 Pore peple and prisounes · fynden hem here fode,
 And sette scoleres to scole · or to somme other craftes;
 Releue religioun · and renten hem bettere;— 32
 ‘And I shal sende 3ow my-selue · seynt Michel myn archangel,
 That no deuel shal 3ow dere · ne fere 3ow in 3owre deyinge,
 And witen 3ow fro wanhope · if 3e wil thus worche,
 And sende 3owre sowles in safte · to my seyntes in ioye.’ 36

Thanne were marchauntz mery · many wepten for ioye,
 And preyseden Pieres the plowman · that purchaced this bulle.
 Men of lawe lest pardoun hadde · that pleteden for mede,

Fynde suche heore foode · for godes loue of heuene;
 Sette scolers to scole · or to sum other craft,
 Rule religion · and rente hem betere;
 'And I schal sende ow my-self · seint Mihel myn aungel, 36
 That no deuel schal 3ou dere · whon 3e dye schulle,
 That I ne schal sende 3or soules · saaf in-to heuene,
 And bi-foren the face of my fader · fourmen or seetes.
 Vsure and auarice · and othes I defende, 40
 That no gile go with ou · bote the grace of treuthe.'

Thenne were marchaundes murie · thei wopen for ioye,
 And 3eeuen Wille for his writynge · wollene clothes;
 For he copiede thus heore cause · thei couden him gret thonk.
 Men of lawe hedden lest · for heo beoth loth 45

Marchans in the margine · hadden menyē 3eres,
Ac á pena et á culpa · Treuthe nolde hem graunte; 23
 For thei holden nat here halydaies · as hollychurche techeth,
 And for thei swere by here saule · and 'so god me mote helpe!
 Azens clene conscience · for couetyse of wynnynge.

Ac vnder his secre seel · Treuthe sente hem a lettere,
 And bad hem bygge baldly · what hem best lykede, 28
 And sitthen sellen hit a-3eyn · and saue the wynnynge,
 Amenden *meson-dieux* ther-with · and myseyse men fynde,
 And wikkede weyes · with here good amende,
 And brygges to-broke · by the heye weyes 32
 Amende in som manere wise · and maydenes helpen;
 Poure puple bedredene · and prisoners in stockes,
 Fynde hem for godes loue · and fauntekynes to scole;
 Releue religion · and renten hem bettere; 36
 'And ich schal sende 3ow my-selue · seynt Michel myn angel,
 That no deuel shal 3ow dere · ne despeir in 3oure deyinge,
 And sende 3oure soules · ther ich my-self dwelle,
 And there a-byde body and soule · in blisse for euere.' 40

Tho were merchauns murye · somme wepte for ioye,
 And preyde for Peers plouhman · that purchasede hem this bulle.
 Alle the puple hadde pardon ynow · that parfytliche lyueden;
 Men of lawe hadde lest · that loth were to plede, 44

To mote for mene men · but ȝif thei hadde money;
So seith the sauter · and Sapience bothe,

Super innocentes munera non accipiunt. A regibus et principibus erit merces eorum.

Of princes and prelatus · heor pencion schulde aryse, 48
And of the pore peple · no peneworth to take.

Ac he that spendeth his speche · and speketh for the pore
That is innocent and neodi · and no mon hath apeyret,
Cumforteth him in his caas · coueiteth not his goodes, 52
Bote for vr lordes loue · lawe for him scheweth,
Schal no deuel at his deth-day · deren him worth a myte,

For the sauter saueth hem nouȝte · such as taketh ȝiftes, 40
And namelich of innocentz · that none yuel ne kunneth;

Super innocentem munera non accipies.

Pledoures shulde peynen hem · to plede for such, an helpe,
Princes and prelates · shulde paye for her trauaille;

A regibus et principibus erit merces eorum.

Ac many a Iustice an Iuroure · wolde for Iohan do more, 44
Than *pro dei pietate* · leue thow none other!
Ac he that spendeth his speche · and speketh for the pore
That is innocent and nedy · and no man appeireth,
Conforteth hym in that cas · with-oute coueytise of ȝiftes, 48
And scheweth lawe for owre lordes loue · as he it hath lerned,
Shal no deuel at his ded-day · deren hym a myȝte,
That he ne worth sauf and his sowle · the sauter bereth wit-
nesse;

Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo, &c.

Ac to bugge water, ne wynde · ne witte, ne fyre the fierthe, 52
Thise foure the fader of heuene · made to this folde in comune;
Thise ben treuthes tresores · trewe folke to helpe,
That neuere shal wax ne wanye · with-oute god hym-selue.

Whan thei drawen on to deye · and indulgences wolde haue,
Her pardoun is ful petit · at her partyng hennes, 57
That any mede of mene men · for her motyng taketh.

ȝe legistres and lawyeres · holdeth this for treuthe,
That, ȝif that I lye · Mathew is to blame, 60
For he bad me make ȝow this · and this prouerbe me tolde,

Quodcumque vultis vt faciant vobis homines, facite eis.

That he ne worth siker saaf · and so seith the psauter,

Qui facit hec, non mouebitur in eternum.

Ac to bugge water, ne wynt · ne wit, (is the thridde), 56

Nolde neuer holy writ · god wot the sothe!

Theos threo for thralles · beo thriuen a-mong vs alle,

To waxen or to wonien · whether god lyketh,

His pardoun in purgatorie · is petit, I trouwe, 60

That eny meede of mene men · for motynge receyueth.

3e legistres and lawyers · 3e witen wher I ly3e;

Seththe 3e seon that hit is so · serueth to the beste.

Bote thei *pre manibus* were payed · for pledyng atte barre.

Ac he that speneth hus speche · and speketh for the poure

That innocent and nedy is · and no man harme wolde,

And conforteth suche in eny cas · and coueyteth nat here 3iftes,

And for the loue of oure lorde · lawe for hem .declareth, 49

Shal haue grace of god ynow · and a gret ioye after.

Beth ywar, 3e wise men · and witty of the lawe;

For whenne 3e draweth to the deth · and indulgence wolde haue,

Hus pardon is ful petit · at hus partynge hennes, 53

That mede of mene men · for here motynge taketh.

For hit is symonye, to sulle · that send is of grace;

That is, witt and water · wynd, and fuyr the furthe, 56

These foure sholden be fre · to alle folk that hit nedeth.

A. 46. *This line is in H only.* 47. V omits all after *Regibus.* 48. princes THU; parishes V. 55. *The Latin is in H only.* 56. (2nd) ne T; or H; V om. C. 47. nedy IMEG; nudy P. 48. 3eftes P. 51. wise men IMEG; wismen P. 52. wenne P. 57. nedep IME; needede P.

Libbinde laborers · that libben bi heore hondes, 64
 That treuliche taken · and treuliche tithen,
 And liuen in loue and in lawe · for heore lowe hertes,
 Hedde the same absolucion · that sent was to Pers.

Alle lybbyng laboreres · that lyuen with her hondes,
 That trewlich taken · and trewlich wynnen,
 And lyuen in loue and in lawe · for her lowe hertis, 64
 Haueth the same absolucioun · that sent was to Peres.

Beggeres ne bidderes · ne beth nouzte in the bulle,
 But if the suggestioun be soth · that shapeth hem to begge.
 For he that beggeth or bit · but if he haue nede, 68
 He is fals with the fende · and defraudeth the nedy,
 And also he bigileth the gyuere · ageines his wil.
 For if he wist he were nouzte nedy · he wolde giue that an-other,
 That were more nedy than he · so the nediest shuld be hulpe. 72
 Catoun kenneth men thus · and the clerke of the stories,
Cui des, videto · is Catounes techynge,
 And in the stories he techeth · to bistowe thyn almes;

Sit elemosina tua in manu tua, donec studes cui des.

Ac Gregori was a gode man · and bad vs gyuen alle 76
 That asketh, for his loue · that vs alle leneth:—

*Non eligas cui miserearis, ne forte pretereas illum qui
 mereatur accipere. Quia incertum est pro quo Deo magis
 placeas.*

For wite 3e neuere who is worthi · ac god wote who hath
 nede,
 In hym that taketh is the treccherye · if any tresoun wawe;
 For he that 3iueth, 3eldeth · and 3arketh hym to reste, 80
 And he that biddeth, borweth · and bryngeth hym-self in dette.
 For beggeres borwen cuermo · and her borghe is god almy3ti,
 To 3elden hem that 3iueth hem · and 3et vsure more:

*Quare non dedisti peccuniam meam ad mensam, ut ego
 veniens cum usuris exegissem illam?*

For-thi biddeth nouzt, 3e beggeres · but if 3e haue gret nede;
 For who-so hath to buggen hym bred · the boke bereth wit-
 nesse, 85
 He hath ynough that hath bred ynough · though he haue nouzt
 elles:

Satis diues est, qui non indiget pane.

Bidders and beggers · beoth not in the bulle, 68
 Bote the suggestion be soth · that schapeth hem to begge.
 For he that beggeth or biddeth · bote he habbe neode,
 He is fals with the fend · and defraudeth the neodi,
 Aud eke gyleth the 3iuere · al ageyn his wille. 72

Alle lybbynge laborours · that lyuen with here handes
 Leelyche and lawefulliche · oure lord treuthe hem graunteth
 Pardon perpetuel · ryght as Peers Plouhman. 60

Beggers and bydders · beth nat in that bulle
 Bote the suggestion be soth · that shapeth hem to begge.
 For he that beggeth other byddeth · bote yf he haue nede,
 He ys fals and faitour · and defraudeth the nedy, 64
 And also gyleth hym that gyueth · and taketh ageyns hus wyl.
 For he that gyueth for godes loue · wolde nat gyue, hus thankus,
 Bote ther he wyste hit were · wel gret neede to gyuen,
 And most meritorie to men · that he 3eueth for. 68
 Caton a-cordeth ther-with · *cui des uideto*;

Wot no man, as ich wene · who is worthy to haue.

B. 75. L omits the former *tua*. 77. *Deo* W; *deum* L. 83. *exigissem*
 CB; *exigerem* L. The MSS. omit *illam*. C. 58. *laberours* P. 59. *lawe-*
fulliche P. 61. *pat* IMEG; *pe* P. 62. *sugestion* P. *shappeþ* P. 63. (*and*)
he MI; *þei* P. 64. *nedy* IMEG; *neede* P. 68. *mest* P. *fore* P.

[*Not in A-text or B-text.*]

The most needy aren oure neighebores · and we nyme good hede,
 As priones in puttes · and poure folke in cotes, 72
 Charged with children · and chef lordes rente,
 That thei with spynnyng may spare · spenen hit in hous-hyre,
 Bothe in mylk and in mele · to make with papelotes,
 To a-glotye with here gurles · that greden after fode. 76
 Al-so hem-selue · suffren muche hunger,
 And wo in winter-tyme · with wakyng a nyghtes
 To ryse to the ruel · to rocke the cradel,
 Bothe to karde and to kembe · to clouten and to wasche, 80
 To rubbe and to rely · russches to pilie,
 That reuthe is to rede · othere in ryme shewe
 The wo of these women · that wonyeth in cotes;
 And of meny other men · that muche wo suffren, 84
 Bothe a-fyngrede and a-furst · to turne the fayre outwarde,
 And beth abasshed for to begge · and wolle nat be aknowe
 What hem needeth at here neihebores · at non and at euen.
 This ich wot witerly · as the worlde techeth, 88
 What other by-houeth · that hath meny children,
 And hath no catel botē hus crafte · to clothy hem and to fede,
 And fele to fonge ther-to · and fewe pans taketh.
 Ther is payn and peny-ale · as for a pytaunce y-take, 92
 Colde flessch and cold fyssh · for veneson ybake;
 Frydayes and fastyng-dayes · a ferthyng-worth of muscles
 Were a feste for suche folke · other so fele cockes.
 These were almes, to helpe · that han suche charges, 96
 And to comfortie such cotyers · and crokede men and blynde.
 Ac beggers with bagges · the whiche brewhouses ben here churches,
 Bote thei be blynde other broke · other elles be syke,
 Thauh he falle for defaute · that faiteth for hus lyf-lode, 100
 Recbeth neuere, 3e ryche · thauh suche lorelles steruen.
 For alle that han here hele · and here eyen syghte,
 And lymes to laborye with · and lolleres lyf vsen,
 Lyuen a-3ens godes lawe · and lore of holy church. 104
 And 3ut arn ther other beggers · in hele, as hit semeth,

C. 74. wip MIG; P om. spenen E; spene IG; spynen P. 83. of IG;
 þat P. þese P. 86. aknowe MEG; yknowe P. 87. att P (1st time).
 94. a IMEG; P om. 95. a folke P; but IMEG omit a. 116. wyght G;

[*Not in A-text or B-text; see p. 234.*]

Ac hem wanteth here witt · men and women bothe,
 The whiche aren lunatik lollers · and leperes a-boute,
 And mad as the mone sitt · more other lasse. 108
 Thei caren for no cold · ne counteth of no hete,
 And arn meuynges after the mone · moneyles thei walke,
 With a good wil, witlees · meny wyde contreys,
 Ryght as Peter dude and Paul · saue that thei preche nat, 112
 Ne myracles maken; · ac meny tymes hem happeth
 To prophecien of the puple · pleyinge, as hit were,
 And to oure sight, as hit semeth · suththe God hath the myghte
 To 3euen eche a wyght wit · welthe, and his hele, 116
 And suffreth suche so gon · hit semeth, to myn inwitt,
 Hit arn as hus aposteles, suche puple · other as his priuye disciples.
 For he sente hem forth seluerles · in a somer garnement,
 With-oute bred and bagge · as the bok telleth, 120

Quando misi uos sine pane et pera;

Barfot and bredles · beggeth thei of no man.
 And thauh he mete with the meyre · amyddes the strete,
 He reuerenceth hym ryght nouht · no rather than another;

Neminem salutaueritis per uiam.

Suche manere of men · Matheu ous techeth, 124
 We sholde haue hem to house · and help hem when thei come;

Et egenos uagosque induc in domum tuam.

For hit aren murye-mouthede men · mynstrales of heuene,
 And godes boyes, bordiours · as the bok telleth,

Si quis uidetur sapiens, fiet stultus ut sit sapiens.

And alle manere mynstrales · men wot wel the sothe, 128
 To vnder-songe hem faire · by-falleth for the ryche,
 For the lordes loue and ladies · that thei with lengen.
 Men suffren al that suche seyn · and in solas taken,
 And 3ut more to suche men · doth er thei passe, 132
 Gyuen hem gyftes and gold · for grete lordes sake.
 Ryght so, 3e riche · rather 3e sholde, for sothe,
 Welcomen and worsshepen · and with 3oure goode helpen 135
 Godes mynstrales and hus messagers · and hus murye bordiours;

whijt E; whit P. 122. meyre P. amyddes I; in-mydest P. 123.
salutaueritis EMG; *salutaueris* Pl. 129. by-falleþ GE; by-falle P
 135. Wolcomen P. 136. bordiours EI; burdiars (*see* l. 127).

Thei libben not in loue · ne no lawe holden ;
Thei weddeth no wommon · that thei with deleth ;

Late vsage be ȝowre solace · of seyntes lyues redynge,
The boke banneth beggarie · and blameth hem in this manere: 88
*Iunior fui, etenim senui; et non vidi iustum derelictum,
nec semen eius querens panem.*

For ȝe lyue in no loue · ne no lawe holde ;
Many of ȝow ne wedde nouȝt · the wommen that ȝe with delen,
But as wilde bestis with wehe · worthen vppe and worchen,
And bryngeth forth barnes · that bastardes men calleth. 92

Bote as wilde beestes, with wo · worcheth to-gedere,
And bringeth forth barnes · that bastardes beon holden. 76

The whiche arn lunatik lollares · and leperes a-boute,
For vnder godes secre seel · here synnes ben ykeuered.
For thei bereth no bagges · ne none botels vnder clokes,
The whiche is lollaren lyf · and lewede eremytes, 140
That loken ful louheliche · to lacchen mennes almesse,
In hope to sitten at euen · by the hote coles,
Vnlouke hus legges abrod · other lygge at hus ese,
Reste hym, and roste hym · and his ryg turne, 144
Drynke drue and deepe · and drawe hym thanne to bedde;
And when hym lyketh and lust · hus leue ys to aryse;
When he ys rysen, rometh out · and ryght wel aspieth
Whar he may rathest haue a repast · other a rounde of bacon,
Suluer other sode mete · and som tyme bothe, 149
A loof other half a loof · other a lompe of chese;
And carieth it hom to hus cote · and cast him to lyue
In ydelnesse and in ese · and by others trauayle. 152
And what frek of thys folde · fisketh thus a-boute,
With a bagge at hus bak · a begeneldes wyse,
And can som manere craft · in cas he wolde hit vse,
Thorgh whiche craft he couthe · come to bred and to ale, 156
And ouer-more to an hater · to helye with hus bones,
And lyueth lyk a lollere · godes lawe hym dampneth.
'Lolleres lyuyng in sleuthe · and ouer-londe strykers
Beeth nat in this bulle,' quath Peers · 'til thei ben amendid,
Nother beggers that beggen · bote yf thei haue neede. 161
The bok blameth alle beggerye · and banneth in this manere,

*Iunior fui, etenim senui, non uidi iustum derelictum, nec
semen eius querens panem; et alibi: Infirmata est
uirtus mea in paupertate.*

Hit needeth nauht nouthe · a-non for to preche,
And lere these lewede men · what thys Latyn meneth, 164
For hit blameth alle beggerie · be 3e ful certeyn.
For thei lyue in no loue · ne no lawe thei holden;
Thei wedde non womon · that thei with delen,
Bringeth forth bastardes · beggers of kynde. 168

that V. B. 88. *querens panem* OC; LWR om. C. 138. ykeuerede P.
159. ouere-londe P. 166. ne IMEG; P om.

Or his bac, or his bon · heo breketh in heore ȝouthē,
 And goth, fayteth with heore fautes · euer-more after.
 Ther ben mo mis-happes amongus hem · hose taketh heede,
 Then of alle othure men · that on molde wandren. 80
 Thei that lyuen thus heore lyf · mouwe lothe the tyme,
 That euere thei weore men i-wrouȝt · whon thei schul henne
 fare.

Or the bakke or some bone · he breketh in his ȝouthē,
 And sitthe gon faiten with ȝoure fautes · for euermore after.
 There is moo mysshape peple · amonge thise beggeres,
 Than of alle maner men · that on this molde walketh; 96
 And thei that lyue thus here lyf · mowe lothe the tyme,
 That euere he was man wrouȝt · whan he shal hennes fare.

Ac olde men and hore · that helpees ben of strengthe,
 And women with childe · that worche ne mowe, 100
 Blynde and bedered · and broken here membres,

That taketh this myschief mekelych · as meseles and othere,
 Han as pleyne pardoun · as the plowman hym-self;
 For loue of her lowe hertis · owre lorde hath hem graunted 104
 Here penaunce and her purgatorie · here on this erthe.

· A. 78. fautes V. 88. loue of THU; V *om.* B. 94. A (*for* And) L.
 C. 171. messhapene P. 173. ȝe me PE; *but* MIG *omit* me. 175. heelpes P.
 181. men IMEG; P *om.* 182. pouerte IMEG; pourte P. 183, 192, &c;
 þesse P. 185. pure IMFEG; poure P. 187. *Only in IK; the rest omit*

Bote olde men and hore · that helpes beoth of strengthe,
 And wymmen with childe · that worchen ne mowen, 84
 Blynde and bedreden · and broken heore membres,
 That taken meschef mekeliche · as meseles or othere,
 Han as pleyn pardoun · as the plouh-mon him-seluen;
 For loue of heore lowe hertes · vr lord hath hem graunted 88
 Heore penaunce and heore purgatorie · is her vppon eorthe.

Other the bak other som bon · thei breken of here children,
 And gooth afaytyng with here fauntes · for euere-more after.
 Ther arn mo misshapen · a-mong suche beggers,
 Than of meny other men · that on this molde walken. 172
 Tho that lyuen thus hure lyf · leyue 3e non othere,
 Thei han no part of pardon · of preyers, ne of penaunces.

Ac olde men and hore · that helpes beeth and nedy,
 And wommen with childe · that worche ne mowen, 176
 Blynde men and bedreden · and broken in here membres,
 And alle poure pacientes · a-payd of godes sonde,
 As mesels and mendinauntes · men yfalle in myschef,
 As prisons and pilgrimes · paraunter men yrobbed, 180
 Other by-lowe thorwe luthere men · and lost here catel after,
 Other thorgh fure other thorwe flood · falle to pouerte,
 That taken these meschiefes meekliche · and myldliche at herte;
 For loue of here lowe hertes · oure lord hath hem graunted
 Here penaunce and here purgatorie · vp-on thys pure erthe, 185
 And pardon with Peers Plouhman · *a pena et a culpa*.
 And alle holy hermites · haue schal the same;

Ac eremites that en-habiten · by the heye weyes, 188
 And in borwes a-mong brewesters · and beggen in churches;—
 Al that holy eremytes · hateden and despisede,
 As rychesses and reuerences · and ryche mennes almesse,
 These lolles, lacchedraweres · lewede eremytes, 192
 Coueyten the contrarie · as cotiers thei lybben.
 For hit beth bote boyes · bollers atten ale,
 Neyther of lynage, ne of lettrure; · ne lyf-holy as eremites,
 That wonede whilom in wodes · with beres and lyones. 196

this line. 188. en-habiten hem PM; *the rest omit hem.* 194. bollers IM; lolles (*wrongly*) PEF. 195. Of lynage of lettrure P; *but I insert Ney-*
per; other MSS. have Of lynage ne of lettrure. 196. whilom IMF; wyle P.

[Not in A-text or B-text.]

Some had lyf-lode of here lynage · and of no lyf elles;
 And some lyuede by here lettrure · and labour of here hondes;
 Somme hadde foreynes to frendes · that hem fode sente;
 And bryddes brouhten to some bred · wherby thei lyueden.
 Alle these holy eremytes · were of hye kynne, 201
 For-soke londe and lordshap · and lykynges of the body.

Ac these eremytes that edefyen thus · by the hye weyes,
 Whilom were workmen · webbes and taillours, 204
 And carters knaues · and clerkus with-oute grace,
 Helden ful hungry hous · and hadde much defaute,
 Long labour and lyte wynnyng · and atte laste aspiden,
 That faitours in frere clothyng · hadde fatte chekus. 208
 For-thi lefte thei here laboure · these lewede knaues,
 And clothed hem in copes · clerkus as hit were,
 Other on of som ordre · othere elles a prophete;
 A-ȝens the lawe he lyueth · yf Latyn be trewe; 212

*Non licet uobis legem uoluntati, sed uoluntatem coniungere
 legi.*

Now kyndeliche, by Crist · beth suche callyd 'lolleres,'
 As by Englisch of oure eldres · of olde menne techyng.
 He that lolleth is lame · other his leg out of ioynthe,
 Other meymed in som membre · for to meschief hit souneth.
 And ryght so sothlyche · suche manere eremytes 217
 Lollen aȝen the byleyue · and lawe of holy church.
 For holy church hoteth · alle manere puple
 Vnder obedience to bee · and buxum to the lawe. 220
 Furst, religious, of religion · here ruele to holde,
 And vnder obedience to be · by dayes and by nyghtes;
 Lewede men to laborie; · and lordes to honte
 In frythes and in forestes · for fox and other bestes 224
 That in wilde wodes ben · and in wast places,
 As wolues that wryyeth men · wommen and children;
 And vp-on Sonedayes to cesse · godes seruyce to huyre,
 Bothe matyns and messe · and, after mete, in churches 228

C. 204. Whilom IMGF; Wylen P. 206. Heelden P. ful IMFG;
 PE om. 212. trewe IEF; trywe P. 215. of IEFG; of þe P. 223.
 and MFG; PIE om. 226. wyrhyeþ P. 234. oþer E; or FG; P om.

[*Not in A-text or B-text; see p. 240.*]

To huyre here euesong · euery man ouhte.
 Thus it by-longeth for lorde · for lered, and lewede,
 Eche halyday to huyre · hollyche the seruice,
 Vigiles and fastyngdayes · forthere-more to knowe, 232
 And fulfille tho fastynges · bote infirmite hit made,
 Pouerte other othere penaunces · as pilgrymages and trauayles.
 Vnder this obedience · arn we echone;
 Who-so brekyth this, be wel war · bot yf he repente, 236
 Amende hym and mercy aske · and meekliche hym shryue,
 Ich drede me, and he deye · hit worth for dedlich synne
 A-counted by-fore Crist · bote conscience excuse hym.
 Loke now where these lolleres · and lewede eremytes, 240
 Yf thei breke thys obedience · that ben so fer fro churchē?
 Wher see we hem on Sonedays · the seruyse to huyre,
 As, matyns by the morwe? · tyl masse by-gynne,
 Other Sonedays at euesonge · seo we wel fewe! 244
 Othere labory for here liflode · as the lawe wolde?
 Ac at mydday meel-tyme · ich mete with hem ofte,
 Comynge in a cope · as he a clerke were;
 A bacheler other a beaupere · best hym by-semeth; 248
 And for the cloth that keuereth hym · cald is he a frere,
 Wassheth and wypeth · and with the furste sitteth.
 Ac while he wrought in thys worlde · and wan hus mete with
 treuthe,
 He sat atte sydbenche · and secounde table; 252
 Cam no wyn in hus wombe · thorw the weke longe,
 Nother blankett in hus bed · ne white bred by-fore hym.
 The cause of al thys caitifte · cometh of meny bisshopes,
 That suffren suche sottes · and othere synnes regne; 256
 Certes, ho so thurste hit segge · *Symon quasi dormit*;
Vigilare were fairour · for thow hast gret charge.
 For meny waker wolues · ben broke in-to foldes;
 Thyne berkeres ben al blynde · that bryngeth forth thy lambren,
Dispergentur oues · thi dogge dar nat berke; 261

237. Amenden P. 240. were P. 241. fer IFG; PEM *om.* 244. wel EFG
 wol P. 245. here IMFEG; oure P. 247. Comynge MEFG; Conynge P.
 249. he MEFIG; here P. 255. bisshopes P. 258. *Vigilare* IMFEG; *Vigi-*
late P. 261. beerke P.

‘Pers,’ quod a prest tho · ‘thi pardon most I reden,
For I wol construe vch a clause · and knowen hit in Englisch.’

And Pers at his preyere · the pardon vnfoldeth, 92
And I bi-hynden hem bothe · bi-heold al the bulle.
In two lynes hit lay · and not a lettre more,
And was i-writen riht thus · in witnesse of treuthe:

‘Pieres,’ quod a prest tho · ‘thi pardoun most I rede,
For I wil construe eche clause · and kenne it the on Engliche.’

And Pieres at his preyere · the pardoun vnfoldeth, 108
And I bihynde hem bothe · bihelde al the bulle.
Al in two lynes it lay · and nouzt a leef more,
And was writen riht thus · in witnesse of treuthe:

Et qui bona egerunt, ibunt in vitam eternam;

Qui vero mala, in ignem eternum.

‘Peter!’ quod the prest tho · ‘I can no pardoun fynde, 112
But “Dowel, and haue wel · and god shal haue thi sowle,
And do yuel, and haue yuel · hope thow non other
But after thi ded-day · the deuel shal haue thi sowle!”’

Et qui bona egerunt, ibunt in vitam eternam;

Qui vero mala, in ignem eternum.

'Peter!' quod the preost tho · 'I con no pardoun fynde, 96
Bote "dowel, and haue wel · and god schal haue thi soule,
And do vuel, and haue vuel · hope thou non othur,
That aftur thi deth-day · to helle schaltou wende!"'

The tarre is vntydy · that to thyne sheep by-longeth,
Hure salue ys of *supersedeas* · in someneres boxes;
Thyne sheep are ner al shabbyd · the wolf shiteth wolles: 264
Sub molli pastore · lupus lanam cacat, et grex
In-custoditus · dilaceratur eo.

Hoow! hurde! wher is thyn hounde · and thyn hardy herte,
For to wyrie the wolf · that thy wolles fouleth? 268
Ich leyue, for thy lacchesse · thow leest meny wederes,
And ful meny fayre flus · falsliche wasshe!
When thy lord loketh to haue · a-louaunce for hus bestes,
And of the monye thow haddist ther-myd · hus meoble to saue,
And the wolles worth weye · woo ys the thenne! 273

Redde rationem uillicacionis tue · other in arerage falle!
Thyn hyre, hurde, as ich hope · hath nouht to quyty thy dette,
Ther as mede ne mercy · may nat a myte auayle, 276
Bote 'haue this for that · tho that thow toke
Mercy for mede · and my lawe breke,
Loke now for thi lacchesse · whether lawe wol the graunte
Purgatorie for thy paye · other perpetuel helle?' 280
For shal no pardoune praye for 3ow ther · nother princes letteres.'

'Peers,' quath a prest tho · 'thy pardoune most ich rede,
Ich can construen ech worde · and kenne hit the in Englishe.'

And Peers at hus preyere · the pardon vnfolded, 284
And ich by-hynde hem bothe · by-heeld al the bulle.
In two lynes hit lay · and no lettere more,
And was ywryte ryght thus · in witnesse of treuthe.

Qui bona egerunt ibunt in uitam eternam:

Qui uero mala, in ignem eternum.

'Peter!' quath the prest tho · 'ich can no pardon fynde, 288
Bote "do wel and haue wel · and god shal haue thy saule,
Do vuel and haue vuel · and hope thow non other
Bote he that vuel lyueth · vuel shal ende!"'

And Pers, for puire teone · pollede hit a-sonder, 100
 And siththe he seide to hem · these semely sawis,

*'Si ambulauero in medio vmbre mortis, non timebo mala,
 quoniam tu mecum es.*

I schal sese of my sowynge,' quod Pers · 'and swynke not
 so harde,

Ne aboute my lyflode · so bisy beo no more!
 Of preyre and of penaunce · my plouh schal ben heraftur,
 And bi-loure that I beo-louh · er my lyf fayle. 105

The prophete his payn eet · in penaunce and wepyng;
 As the psauter vs seith · so dude moni othere;
 That loueth God lelly · his lyflode is wel muche: 108
Fuerunt michi lacrimae mee panes, die ac nocte.

And Pieres for pure tene · pulled it atweyne, 116
 And seyde, *'si ambulauero in medio vmbre mortis, non
 timebo mala; quoniam tu mecum es.*

I shal cessen of my sowyng; quod Pieres · 'and swynk nouȝt
 so harde,

Ne about my bely-ioye · so bisi be namore!
 Of preyers and of penaunce · my plow shal ben hereafter,
 And wepen whan I shulde slepe · though whete-bred me faille.

The prophete his payn ete · in penaunce and in sorwe, 121
 By that the sauter seith · so dede other manye;
 That loueth god lelly · his lyflode is ful esy:

Fuerunt michi lacrimae mee panes die ac nocte.

And, but if Luke lye · he lereth vs bi foules, 124
 We shulde nouȝt be to bisy · aboute the worldes blisse;
Ne solliciti sitis · he seyth in the gospel,
 And sheweth vs bi ensamples · vs selue to wisse.

The foules on the felde · who fynt hem mete at wynter? 128
 Haue thei no gernere to go to · but god fynt hem alle.'

'What!' quod the prest to Perkyn · 'Peter! as me thinketh,
 Thow art lettred a litel · who lerned the on boke?'

'Abstynence the abbesse,' quod Pieres · 'myne a. b. c. me
 tauȝte, 132

And Conscience come afterward · and kenned me moche more.'

'Were thow a prest, Pieres,' quod he · 'thow miȝte preche
 where thow sholdest,

As deuynour in deuynyte · with *dixit insipiens* to thi teme.'

And bote ȝif Luke lyȝe · he lereth vs a-nother;
 That to bisi we ne schulde beo · her vppon eorthe,
 While we woneth in this world · to make vs wombe-ioye.
Ne solliciti sitis · he seith in his godspel, 112
 And scheweth hit by ensauple · vr soules to wisse.
 The foules in the firmament · who fynt hem in winter?
 Whon the forst freseth · foode hem bi-houeth;
 Haue thei no gerner to go to · ȝit god fynt hem alle.' 116
 'What?' quod the prest to Perkyn · 'Peter! as me thinketh,
 Thow art lettret a luyte · ho lered the on boke?'
 'Abstinence the abbesse · myn a-b-ce me tauȝte,
 And Concience com aftur · and kennide me betere.' 120
 'Weore thou a prest,' quod he · 'thou mihtest preche whon
 the luste,
Quoniam literaturam non cognoui · mihte be thy teeme!'

A. 101. *This line is in H only*; VTU *have* and seide, at end of l. 100.
 V omits all after *timebo*. 106. prophete—eet U; prophetes peyneden hem V.
 109. ȝif luke UT; luk H; the bok V. 114. who fynt THU (see l. 116);
 heo feedeth V. 120. kennide TU; tauȝte VH. 122. thy HTU; my V.

'Lewede lorel!' quod he · 'luite lokestou on the bible,
 On Salamones sawes · seldom thou bi-holdest; 124
 Slynge away these scornors, he seith · with here shrewid fliting,
 For with hem redely · y kepe not to rest;

Eice derisores et iurgia cum eis, ne crescant.'

The prest and Perkin tho · apposeden either other,
 And thorw heore wordes I a-wok · and waitide aboute, 128
 And sauh the sonne sitte south · euene that tyme.
 Meteles and moneyeles · on Maluerne hulles,
 Musyng on this meeteles · a myle-wei ich 3eode.

Mony tyme this metels · han made me to studie 132
 For Pers loue, the plouh-mon · ful pensyf in myn herte;

'Lewed lorel!' quod Pieres · 'litel lokestow on the bible, 136
 On Salomones sawes · selden thow biholdest,

Eice derisores et iurgia cum eis, ne crescant, &c.'

The prest and Perkyn · apposeden eyther other,
 And I thorw here wordes a-woke · and waited aboute,
 And seighe the sonne in the south · sitte that tyme, 140
 Meteles and moneeles · on Maluerne hulles,
 Musyng on this meteles; · and my waye ich 3ede.

Many tyme this meteles · hath maked me to studye
 Of that I seigh slepyng · if it so be myzte, 144
 And also for Peres the plowman · ful pensyf in herte,
 And which a pardoun Peres hadde · alle the peple to conforte,
 And how the prest impugned it · with two propre wordes.
 Ac I haue no sauoure in songewarie · for I se it ofte faille;
 Catoun and canonistres · conseillesh vs to leue 149
 To sette sadnesse in songewarie · for, *sompnia ne cures*.
 Ac for the boke bible · bereth witnesse,
 How Danyel deuyned · the dremes of a kynge, 152
 That was Nabugodonosor · nempned of clerkis.
 Daniel seyde, 'sire kynge · thi dremeles bitokneth,
 That vnkouth knyghtes shul come · thi kyngdom to cleue;
 Amonges lowere lordes · thi londe shal be departed.' 156
 And as Danyel deuyned · in dede it felle after,
 The kynge lese his lordship · and lower men it hadde.

A. 124. seldom U; luite V. 125, 126. These lines are in H only. For *Eice* VTHU have *Ecce*. *ne crescant* TU; *nunc crescant* V. 128. waitide

For that I sauh slepyng · ȝif hit so be mihte.
 Bote Catoun construweth hit nay · an canonistres bothe,
 And siggen bi hem-seluen · *sompnia ne cures.* 136
 Ac for the bible · bereth witnesse hou
 Daniel deuynede · the dremels of a kyng,
 That Nabugodonosor · nempne these clerkes.
 Daniel seide, 'sir kyng · thi sweuene is to mene, 140
 That vnkouthe knihtes schul come · thi kingdam to clayme;
 Among lower lordes · thi lond schal be departet.'
 As Daniel diuinede · hit fel in dede after, 143
 The kyng laste his lordschupe · and lasse men hit hadden.

The preest thus and Perkyn · of the pardon Iangled. 292
 Throgh here wordes ich awook · and waitede aboute,
 And seih the sonne in the south · sitte that tyme.
 Meteles and moneyles · on Maluerne hulles,
 Musyng on this meteles · a myle-wey ich ȝeode. 296
 And meny tymes this meteles · made me to studie
 Of that ich seih slepyng · yf hit so be myghte,
 And of Peers Plouhman · ful pensyf in herte,
 And which a pardon Peers hadde · the puple to gladen, 300
 And how the preest inpugned hit · thorwe two propre wordes.
 Ac men setten nat by songewarie · men seen hit ofte faile,
 Caton counteth hit at nouht · and canonistres at lasse.

Ac for the bok bible · bereth good wyttnesse, 304
 How Daniel dyuinede · and vndude the dremeles
 Of kyng Nabugodonosor · that no peer hadde,
 And sitthe after to hus sones · seide hem what thei thouhte:—

THU; lokede V. 131. Musyng THU; Mony elyng V. 139. nempne—
 clerkes UT; V *om.* 141. kindam V. B. 137. *Eice* O; *Ecce* LWRC. C.
 296. ȝees P; *see* l. 297. 299. ful IFG; P *om.* 302. mei P (*for and men*).

And Ioseph mette metels · ful meruillous alse,
 How the sonne and the mone · and enleuene sterres
 Falden bi-fore his feet · and heileden him alle.
 'Beu fis,' quod his fader · 'for defaute we schulle, 148
 I my-self, and my sones · seche the for neode.'

Hit fel as the fader seide · in Pharaones tyme,
 Ther Ioseph was Iustise · Egipte to kepen.

Al this maketh me · on metels to thenken 152
 Mony tyme at midniht · whon men schulde slepe,
 On Pers the plouh-mon · and whuch a pardoun he hedde,
 And hou the preost inpugnede hit · al bi pure resoun,

And Ioseph mette merueillously · how the mone and the
 sonne,

And the elleuene sterres · hailed hym alle. 160

Thanne Iacob iugged · Iosephes sweuene:

'Beau filz,' quod his fader · 'for defaute we shullen,
 I my-self and my sones · seche the for nede.'

It bifel as his fader seyde · in Pharaoes tyme, 164

That Ioseph was Iustice · Egipte to loken,

It bifel as his fader tolde · his frendes there hym souzte.

And al this maketh me · on this meteles to thynke;

And how the prest preued · no pardoun to Dowel, 168

And demed that Dowel · indulgences passed,

Biennales and triennales · and bisschopes lettres,

And how Dowel at the day of dome · is dignelich vnderfongen,

And passeth al the pardoun · of seynt Petres cherche. 172

Now hath the pope powere · pardoun to graunte the peple

With-uten eny penaunce · to passen in-to heuene;

This is owre bileue · as lettered men vs techeth,

*Quodcumque ligaueris super terram, erit ligatum et in
 celis, &c.*

And so I leue lelly · (lordes forbode ellis!) 176

That pardoun and penaunce · and preyeres don saue

Soules that haue synned · seuene sithes dedly.

And diuinede that Dowel · indulgence passede, 156
 Bienals and trienals · and busschopes lettres.
 Dowel on domesday · is digneliche i-preiset,
 He passeth al the pardouns · of seint Petrus churchē.
 Now hath the pope pouwer · pardoun to graunte, 160
 The peple with-oute penaunce · to passe to ioye.
 This is a lef of vre bileeue · as lettret men vs techeth,
Quodcunque ligaueris super terram, erit ligatum et in celis.
 And so bileeue I lelly · (vr lord forbeode hit elles!)
 That pardoun and penaunce · and preyers don sauē 164
 Soules that han sunget · seuen sithes dedlich.

And Ioseph mette meruelousliche · how the mone and the sonne
 And elleuene sterres · hailsede hym alle; 309
 Thenne Iacob Iuged · Iosephes sweuene:
 ‘*Beau fits,*’ quath the fader · ‘we shulleth for defaute,
 Ich my-self and my sones · seche the for neede;’ 312
 Hit by-fel as the fader seide · in Pharaoes tyme,
 That Ioseph was Iustice · Egipte to saue;
 Hus eleuene brotheres · hym for neede souhte,
 And hus fader Iacob · and al-so hus dame:— 316
 Al this maketh me · on meteles to studie,
 And how the preest preuede · no pardon to Do-wel;
 And demede that Dowel · indulgences passede,
 Byennals · and tryennals · and bisshopes letteres. 320
 For ho so doth wel here · at the daye of dome
 Worth faire vnderfonge · by-for god that tyme.
 So Dowel passeth pardon · and pilgrimages to Rome;
 3ut hath the pope power · pardon to graunte 324
 To puple, with-oute penaunce · to passen in-to Ioye,
 As lettred men ous lereth · and lawe of holy churchē:

*Quodcunque ligaueris super terram erit ligatum et in celis;
 Et quodcunque solueris super terram erit solutum et in celis.*

And so ich by-leyue leelly · lordes forbode elles,
 That pardon and penaunce · and preieres don saue 328
 Saules that han synged · seuen sithes dedliche.

dop wel MEFG; wel dop P. 327. by-leue P (*elsewhere* by-leyue). 329.
 Saules E; Soules MIFG; Saule P. sithes IFG; sithe PE.

Bote trustene to trienals · treuly me thinketh
 Is not so syker for the soule · sertes, as Do-wel.
 For-thi I rede ȝow renkes · that riche ben on eorthe, 168
 Vppon trust of oure tresour : trienals to haue,
 Beo ȝe neuer the baldore · to breke the ten hestes ;
 And nomeliche, ȝe meires · and ȝe maister iuges,
 That han the welthe of this world · for wyse men ben holden,
 To purchasen pardoun · and the popes bulles. 173
 At the dredful day of dom · ther dede schullen a-rysen,
 And comen alle bi-fore Crist · and a-countes ȝelden,
 How thou laddest thi lyf · and his lawe keptest, 176
 What thou dudest day bi day · the doom the wol rehersen ;
 A powhe-ful of pardoun ther · with prouincials lettres,

Ac to trust to thise triennales · trewly me thinketh,
 Is nouȝt so syker for the soule · certis, as is Dowel. 180
 For-thi I rede ȝow, renkes · that riche ben on this erthe,
 Vppon trust of ȝowre tresoure · triennales to haue,
 Be ȝe neuere the balder · to breke the ten hestes ;
 And namelich, ȝe maistres · mayres and iugges, 184
 That han the welthe of this worlde · and for wyse men ben
 holden,
 To purchase ȝow pardoun · and the popis bulles.
 At the dredeful dome · whan dede shullen rise,
 And comen alle bifor Cryst · acountis to ȝelde, 188
 How thow laddest thi lyf here · and his lawes keptest,
 And how thow dedest day bi day · the dome wil reherce ;
 A poke-ful of pardoun there · ne prouinciales lettres,
 Theigh ȝe be founde in the fraternete · of alle the foure ordres, 192
 And haue indulgences double-folde · but if Dowel ȝow help,
 I sette ȝowre patentis and ȝowre pardounz · at one pies hele !
 For-thi I conseilte alle Cristene · to crye god mercy,
 And Marie his moder · be owre mene bitwene, 196
 That god gyue vs grace here · ar we gone hennes,
 Suche werkes to werche · while we ben here,
 That after owre deth-day · Dowel reherce,
 At the day of dome · we dede as he hiȝte. 200

Thauh thou be founden in fraternite · a-mong the foure ordres,
 And habbe indulgence i-doubled · bote Dowel the helpe, 180
 I nolde 3eue for thi pardoun · one pye-hele!
 Forthi I counseile alle Cristene · to crie Crist merci,
 And Marie his moder · to beo mene bi-twene,
 That god 3iue vs grace · er we gon hennes, 184
 Such werkes to worche · while that we ben here,
 That aftur vr deth-day · Dowel reherce,
 That atte day of dom · we duden as he us hi3te.

*Explicit hic Visio Willelmi de Petro le Plouzman. Eciā
 incipit Vita de Do-wel, Do-bet, et Do-best secundum wyt
 et resoun.*

Ac to trysten vpon triennels · treweliche me thynketh
 Ys nat so syker for the saule · certys, as ys Dowel.
 For-thi ich rede 3ow, renkes · that riche ben on thys erthe,
 Vp trist of 3oure tresour · tryennels to haue, 333
 Be 3e neuere the boldere · to breke the ten hestes;
 And nameliche, 3e maistres · meyres and Iuges,
 That han the welthe of this worlde · and wise men ben holde,
 To purchace 3ow pardon · and the popes bulles. 337
 At the dredful day of dome · when dede men shullen ryse,
 And comen alle by-fore Crist · a-countes to 3elde,
 Howe we ladde oure lyf here · and hus lawes kepte, 340
 And how we dude day by day · the dome wol reherce.
 A poke-ful of pardon there · ne prouincials letteres,
 Thauh we be founde in fraternite · of alle fyue ordres,
 And haue indulgences doblefolde · bote Dowel ous helpe, 344
 Ich sette by pardon nat a peese · nother a pye-hele!
 For-thi ich counsaile alle Cristine · to crye god mercy,
 And Marye hus moder · be oure mene to hym,
 That god 3eue ous grace here · er we go hennes, 348
 Suche workes to worche · whil we ben here,
 That after oure deth-day · Dowel reherce
 At the day of dome · we dude as he tauhte.—Amen.

Hic explicit uisio Willelmi de Petro Plouhman.

PASSUS IX.

Incipit hic Dowel, Dobet, and Dobest.

THUS i-robed in russet · romed I a-boute
 Al a somer sesoun · for to seche Dowel,
 And fraynide ful ofte · of folk that I mette
 3if any wizt wiste · where Do-wel was at inne, 4
 And what man he mizte be · of many man I askide.

PASSUS VIII.

Passus octauus de visione Petri Plowman. Incipit Dowel, Dobet, et Dobest.

THUS yrobed in russet · I romed aboute
 Al a somer sesoun · for to seke Dowel,
 And frayned ful oft · of folke that I mette,
 If ani wizte wiste · where Dowel was at inne, 4
 And what man he mizte be · of many man I axed.

Was neuere wizte, as I went · that me wisse couthe
 Where this lede lenged · lasse ne more;
 Tyl it bifel on a Fryday · two freres I mette, 8
 Maistres of the menoures · men of grete witte.
 I hailed hem hendely · as I hadde lerned,
 And preyed hem par charitee · ar thei passed forther,
 If thei knewe any contre · or costes, as thei went, 12
 Where that Dowel dwelleth · doth me to wytene.

For thei ben men on this molde · that moste wyde walken,
 And knowen contrees, and courtes · and many kynnes places,
 Bothe prynces paleyses · and pore mennes cotes, 16
 And Do-wel and Do-yuel · where thei dwelle bothe.

‘Amonges vs,’ quod the menours · ‘that man is dwellynge,
 And euere hath, as I hope · and euere shal here-after.’

A. 3. fraynide TH₁; askede V. folk TUH₁; Men V. 4, 5. *These two lines are from T; also in UH₁; V om.* 11. V has furre passede; passide serpere TUH₁. 12. V knewe, and om. any. 14. þe TH₁; a V. B. 1.

Was neuer wiht as I wente · that me wisse couthe
 Wher this ladde loggede · lasse ne more;
 Til hit fel on a Friday · twei freres I mette, 8
 Maistres of the menours · men of grete wittes.
 Ich heilede hem hendeli · as ich hedde i-leorned,
 And preiede hem, par charite · er thei passede furre,
 ‘ȝif thei knewen any cuntre · or coostes a-boute 12
 Wher that Dowel dwelleth · do me to wisse.’
 ‘Mari,’ quod the menour · ‘a-mong vs he dwelleth,
 And euer hath, as ich hope · and euer schal her-after.’

PASSUS XI.

Incipit uisio eiusdem Willelmi de Dowel.

THUS robed in russett · ich romede a-boute,
 Al a somer seson · for to seke Dowel,
 And frainede ful ofte · of folke that ich mette,
 Yf eny wiht wist · wher Dowel was at ynnē, 4
 And what man he myghte be · of meny man ich askede.
 Was neuere wiht in this worlde · that wisse me couthe,
 Wher that he longede · lasse ne more;
 Til hit by-ful on a Frydaye · two freres ich mette, 8
 Maisteres of the menours · men of grete witte.
 Ich hailsede hem hendilyche · as ich hadde ylerned,
 And prayede pur charite · ar thei passede forthere,
 Yf thei knew eny contreie · other costes a-aboutē, 12
 Wher that Dowel dwelleth— · ‘dere frendes, telleth me;
 For ȝe aren men of thys molde · that most wide walken,
 And knowen contreies and courtes · and menyē kynne places,
 Bothe princes paleis · and poure menne cotes, 16
 And Dowel and Do-vuele · wher thei dwellen bothe.’
 ‘Sothliche,’ seide the frere · ‘he soiourneth with ous freres,
 And ay hath, as ich hope · and euer wol her-after.’

romed WCRO; rowmed L. C. 3. And IMGF; P om. 4. with (for
 wiht) P. wer P. 9. ȝe IEF; PMS om. 10. ylernede P. 19. euer FGI; P om.

'*Contra*,' quod I as a clerk · and comsede to dispuite, 16
 ' *Sepcies in die cadit iustus* ;

Seue sithes a day, seith the bok · sungeth the rihtful mon;
 And hose sungeth,' I seide · 'certes, as me thinketh,
 That Dowel and Do-vuele · mowe not dwelle togedere.

Ergo, he nis not alwey · at hom among ow freres, 20
 He is other while elles-wher · to wisse the peple.'

'I schal seie the, my sone' · seide the frere thenne,
 'Hou seuen sithes the sadde mon · sungeth in a day;
 Bi a forebisene,' seide the frere · 'I schal the feire schewe. 24

'*Contra*,' quod I as a clerke · and comsed to disputen, 20
 And seide hem sothli, '*sepcies · in die cadit iustus* ;

Seuene sythes, seith the boke · synneth the riztful.

And who-so synneth,' I seyde · 'doth yuel, as me thinketh,
 And Dowel and Do-yuel · mow nouzt dwelle togideres. 24

Ergo, he nys nauzt alway · amonge 3ow freres;
 He is otherwhile ellis-where · to wisse the peple.'

'I shal sey the, my sone' · seide the frere thanne,
 'How seuene sithes the sadman · on the day synneth; 28
 By a forbisene,' quod the frere · 'I shal the faire shewe.

Lat brynge a man in a bote · amydde a brode water,
 The wynde and the water · and the bote waggyng
 Maketh the man many a tyme · to falle and to stonde; 32
 For stonde he neuere so styf · he stombleth 3if he moeue;

Ac 3it is he sauf and sounde · and so hym bihoueth,
 For 3if he ne arise the rather · and rauzte to the stiere,
 The wynde wolde, wyth the water · the bote ouerthrowe; 36
 And thanne were his lyf loste · thourgh lacchesse of hym-self.

And thus it falleth,' quod the frere · 'bi folke here on erthe;
 The water is likned to the worlde · that wanyeth and wexeth,

A. 16. *Latin from* T_{UH}₁; V *om.*
 21. other T_H₁; or V.

20. at hom T_H₁; a tom V.
 24. a forebisene T_{UH}₁; ensauple V.

Let bringe a mon in a bot · a-midde a brod water,
 And the wint and the watur · and the waggyng of the bot
 Maketh the mon mony tyme · to stomble and to falle; 27
 (For stonde he neuere so stif · he stumbleth in the waggyng);
 And 3it he is saaf and sound · and so him bi-houeth;
 For 3if he ne rise the rather · and rauhte to the steorne,
 The wynt wolde with the water · the bot ouer-throwe; 31
 Ther weore the monnes lyf i-lost · thorw lachesse of himselue.
 Riht thus hit fareth,' quod the frere · 'bi folk her on eorthe;
 The watur is liknet to the world · that wonieth and waxeth;

'*Contra*,' quath ich as a clerke · and comsede to dispute, 20
 And seide sothliche · '*septies in die cadit iustus*,
 Fallynge fro ioye · Iesus wot the sothe!
 "Seuene sythes," seith the bok · "syngeth day by day
 The alther-ryghtfulleste renk · that regneth vpon erthe." 24
 And ho so syngeth,' ich seide · 'certys, doth nat wel;
 For ho so syngeth · sikerliche doth vuele,
 And Do-wel and Do-vuele · may nat dwelle to-gederes.
Ergo, he ys nat al-way · at hom among 3ow Freres; 28
 He is som while elles-wher · to wisse the puple.'

'Ich shal sei the, my sone,' · seide the frere thenne,
 'How seuene sithes the sadde man · syngeth on the day.
 By a forbusene,' quath the frere · 'ich shal the faire shewe. 32

Let brynge a man in a bot · in-myddes a brode water;
 The wynde and the water · and waggyng of the bote
 Maketh the man meny tyme · to stomble, yf he stande;
 Stonde he neuere so styfliche · thorgh sterynge of the bote 36
 He bendeth and boweth · the body is vnstable,
 Ac 3ut he is saf and sounde; · so fareth hit by the ryghtful.
 Thauh he falle, he falleth nat · bote as ho fulle in a bote, 39
 That ay is saf and sounde · that sitteth with-ynne the borde.
 So hit fareth,' quath the frere · 'by ryghtful mannes fallynge;
 Thawe he thorgh fondinge falle · he falleth nat out of charite;
 So dedliche synne doth he nat · for Dowel hym helpeth.
 The water ys likned to the worlde · that wanyeth and wexeth; 44

32. lachesse T^{UH},; sleupe V. B. 21. hem WCOB; L om. C. 23. sythe P.
 26. synegeþ P. 37. his (for is) P. 42. þorghe P.

The goodes in this world · ben lyk this grete wawes,
 Riht as wyndes and watres · waleweth aboute. 36

The bot is liknet to the bodi · that brutel is of kuynde;
 And thorw the fend and his flesch · and the false world
 Sungeth the sadde mon · seuen sithes in the day.

But dedly sunne doth he not · for Dowel him helpeth, 40
 That is, Charite the champion · cheef help azeyn sunne;
 For he strengtheth the to stonde · he stureth thi soule,
 That thauȝ thi bodi bouwe · as a bot in the water,
 Euer is thi soule saaf · bote ȝif thi-self wollex 44

The godis of this grounde aren like · to the grete wawes, 40
 That as wyndes and wederes · walweth aboute.

The bote is likned to owre body · that brutel is of kynde,
 That thorough the fende and the flesshe · and the frele worlde
 Synneth the sadman · a day, seuene sythes. 44

Ac dedly synne doth he nouȝt · for Dowel hym kepith,
 And that is Charite the champioun · chief help azein synne;
 For he strengtheth man to stonde · and stereth mannes soule,
 And though thi body bow · as bote doth in the water, 48
 Ay is thi soule sauf · but if thi-self wole

Do a dedly synne · and drenche so thi soule;
 God wole suffre wel thi sleuthe · ȝif thy-self lyketh.
 For he ȝaf the to ȝeresȝyue · to ȝeme wel thi-selue, 52
 And that is witte and fre wille · to euery wyȝte a porcioun,
 To fleghyng foules · to fissesches & to bestes.

Ac man hath moste thereof · and moste is to blame,
 But if he worche wel ther-with · as Dowel hym techeth.' 56

'I haue no kynde knowyng,' quod I · 'to conceyue alle ȝowre
 wordes,

Ac if I may lyue and loke · I shal go lerne bettere.'
 'I bikenne the Cryst,' quod he · 'that on the crosse deyde.'
 And I seyde, 'the same · saue ȝow fro myschaunce, 60
 And ȝiue ȝow grace on this grounde · good men to worthe.'

And thus I went wide-where · walkyng myne one,
 By a wilde wilderness · and bi a wode-syde.
 Blisse of tho briddes · abyde me made, 64

A. 47. þiself—maistrie TH₁; þou art þin owne mayster V. 50. þe TUH₁;
 V om. B. 43. (2nd) þe WCOB; þi LR. 49. if WCOB; LR om. 53.
 a (for and) L. 59. quod he W; LCOB om. 64. abyde me made R;

Folewe thi flessches wil · and the fendes aftur,
And do dedlich sunne · and drenche thi-seluen,
God wol soffre the dye so · for thi-self hast the maistrie.'

'I haue no kynde knowyng,' quod I · 'to conceyue thi wordes,
But ȝif I may liuen and loken · I schal go lerne betere. 49
I beo-take ȝou to crist · that on the crois dizede.'

And thei seiden the same · 'God saue the from mischaunce,
And ȝiue the grace vppon grounde · in good lyf to ende.' 52

Thus I wente wyden-wher · Dowel to seche;
And as I wente bi a wode · walkyng myn one,
Blisse of the briddes · made me to abyde,

The godes of this grounde aren lyke · to the grete wawes,
That as wyndes and wederes · walwen a-boute;
The bot ys lykned to oure body · that brotel ys of kynde,
That thorgh the fende and oure flesch · and this frele worlde 48
Syngeth seuene sithes · the saddest man on erthe,
And lyfholiest of lyf · that lyueth vnder the sonne.

Ac free wil and free wit · folweth a man euere
To repenten and ryse · and rowen out of synne, 52
To contricion, to confession · til he come to hus ende.
Rather haue we no reste · til we restitue
Our lyf to oure lord god · for oure lykames gultes.'

'Ich haue no kynde knowyng,' quath ich · 'to conceyue al thy
speche, 56
Ac yf ich may lyue and loke · ich shal go lerne bettere.'
'Ich by-kenne the Crist,' quath he · 'that on the croice deide.'
And iche seide, 'the same · saue ȝow fro meschaunce,
And gyue me grace on this grounde · with good ende to deye.' 60
Ich wente forth wyde-where · walkyng myn one,
In a wylde wyldernesse · by a wode-syde.
Blisse of the briddes · a-byde me made,

brouȝte me aslepe LWCOB; cf. l. 67. C. 45. þis IMFEG; þe P. 46.
That I; For F; P om. 47. lycknede P; see l. 44. 49. Senegeþ P.
sithes IMFE; sithe P. 63. þe IMFG; P om.

And vnder a lynde, vppon a launde · leonede I a stounde, 56
 For to leorne the layes · that louely foules maden.

Blisse of the briddes · brouȝten me a slepe;
 The meruilloste meetyng · mette I me thenne
 That euere dremede driht · in drecchyng, I wene. 60

A muche mon, me thouhte · lyk to my-seluen,
 Com and clepede me · be my kuynde nome.
 'What art thou,' quod I · 'that my nome knowest?'
 'That thow wost wel,' quod he · 'and no wiȝt betere.' 64
 'Wot I,' quod I, 'ho art thou?' · 'Thought,' seide he thenne,
 'I haue suwed the this seuen ȝer · seȝe thou me no rathere?'
 'Art thou Thouȝt?' quod I tho · 'const thou me telle,

And vnder a lynde vppon a launde · lened I a stounde,
 To lythe the layes · the louely foules made.
 Murthe of her mouthes · made me there to slepe;
 The merueillousest meteles · mette me thanne 68
 That euer dremed wyȝte · in worlde, as I wene.

A moche man, as me thouȝte · and lyke to my-selue
 Come and called me · by my kynde name.
 'What artow,' quod I tho · 'that thow my name knowest?' 72
 'That thow wost wel,' quod he · 'and no wyȝte betere.'

'Wote I what thow art?' · 'Thought,' seyde he thanne,
 'I haue suwed the this seuene ȝere · sey thow me no rather?'
 'Art thow Thought!' quod I tho · 'thou coutheest me wisse 76
 Where that Dowel dwelleth · and do me that to knowe?'

'Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde,' quod he,
 'Aren three faire vertues · and beth nauȝte fer to fynde.
 Who-so is trewe of his tonge · and of his two handes, 80
 And thorough his laboure or thorough his londe · his lyflode
 wynneth,

And is trusti of his tailende · taketh but his owne,
 And is nouȝt dronkenlew ne dedeignous · Dowel hym folweth.

Dobet doth ryȝt thus · ac he doth moche more; 84
 He is as low as a lombe · and loueliche of speche,
 And helpeth alle men · after that hem nedeth;
 The bagges and the bigurdeles · he hath to-broken hem alle,

A. 64. wiȝt TUH₂; bodi V. 65. thought—þenne from U; V has þhouȝte
 I me seide I þenne. 66. V om. þou. 71. He (for Ho) V. C. 69.

Wher that Dowel dwelleth · do me to wisse?' 68

'Dowel,' quod he, 'and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde
Beoth threo faire vertues · and beoth not fer to fynde.

Ho is meke of his mouth · mylde of his speche,
Trewē of his tonge · and of his two hondes, 72

And bi his labur or bi his lond · his lyflode wynneth,
And trusti of his taylende · taketh bote his owne,
And is not dronkeleuh ne deynous · Dowel him foleweth.

Dobet doth thus · bote he doth muche more; 76
He is as louh as a lomb · louelich of speche;

While he hath ouzt of his owne · he helpeth ther neod is,
The bagges and the bi-gurdeles · he hath broken hem alle

And vnder lynde in a launde · lenede ich a stounde, 64
To lithen here laies · and here loueliche notes.

Murthe of here murye mouthes · made me to slepe;
And merueilousliche me mette · a-myddes al that blisse.

A muche man, me thouhte · lyke to my-selue, 68
Cam and callede me · by my kynde name.

'What art thou?' quath ich · 'that my name knowest?'

'That wost thou, Wille,' quath he · 'and no wight betere.'

'Wot ich,' quath ich, 'ho art thou?' · 'Thouhte,' seide he
thenne; 72

'Ich haue the suwed this seue ȝer · seih thou me no rather?'

'Art thou Thouhte?' quath ich tho · 'thow couthest me wisse
Where that Dowel dwelleth · and do me to knowe?'

'Dowel and Dobet,' quath he · 'and Dobest the thridde 76
Beth thre fayre vertues · and beeth nauht ferr to fynde.

Who-so is trewe of hys tonge · and of hus two handes,
And thorw leel labour lyueth · and loueth his emcristine,

And ther-to trewe of hus tail · and halt wel his handes, 80
Nouht dronkelewe ne deynous · Dowel hym folweth.

Dobet doth al this · ac ȝut he doth more;
He is lowe as a lombe · and loueliche of speche,

And helpeth herteliche alle men · of that he may aspare. 84
The bagges and the by-gurdeles · he hath to-broke hem alle,

kynde I; ryhte PEFMG. 70, 72. ert P. 74. Ert P. 78. trywe P.
two EF; to P. 79. ȝorwe P. 80. trywe P.

That the Aueraus hedde · or eny of his heires ; 80
 And with Mammonas moneye · hath maked him frendes,
 And is ronnen in-to religiun · and hath rendret the bible,
 And precheth the peple · seint Poules wordes,

Libenter sufferite.

“Ȝe wyse, soffreth the vn-wyse · with ow for to libbe,” 84
 And with glad wille doth hem good · for so god himself hizte.

Dobest is a-boue bothe · and bereth a busschopes cros,
 Is hoket atte ende · to holden hem in good lyf.
 A pyk is in that potent · to punge a-doun the wikkede, 88
 That wayten eny wikkednesse · Dowel to teone.
 And as Dowel and Dobet · duden hem to vnderstonde,
 Thei han i-corouned a kyng · to kepen hem alle,

That the erl Auarous · helde, and his heires ; 88
 And thus with Mammonaes moneie · he hath made hym frendes,
 And is ronne in-to Religioun · and hath rendred the bible,
 And precheth to the poeple · seynt Poules wordes,

Libenter suffertis insipientes, cum sitis ipsi sapientes,

“And suffreth the vnwise · with ȝow for to libbe,” 92
 And with gladde wille doth hem gode · for so god ȝow hoteth.

Dobest is aboue bothe · and bereth a bisschopes crosse,
 Is hoked on that one ende · to halie men fro helle.
 A pyke is on that potente · to pulte adown the wikked, 96
 That wayten any wikkednesse · Dowel to tene.
 And Dowel and Dobet · amonges hem ordeigned
 To croune one to be kyng · to reule hem bothe;
 That ȝif Dowel or Dobet · did aȝein Dobest, 100
 Thanne shal the kyng come · and casten hem in yrens,
 And but if Dobest bede for hem · thei to be there for euere.

Thus Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde,
 Crouned one to be kyng · to kepen hem alle, 104
 And to reule the Reume · bi her thre wittes,
 And none other-wise · but as thei thre assented.’

I thonked Thouȝt tho · that he me thus tauȝte;
 ‘Ac ȝete sauoureth me nouȝt thi seggyng · I coueite to lerne

A. 87. hem U; him V; men TH₂. 88. in þat potent TH₂; V has in þe ende, copied by mistake from l. 87. 93. This line is from T; also in UH₂; V om.
 95. hem TUH₂; him V. 96. hem TUH₂; V om. 101. thouȝt—that TH₂;

That 3if Dowel or Dobet · dude a3eyn Dobest, 92
 And were vnbuxum at his biddinge · and bold to don ille,
 Then schulde the kyng comen · and casten hem in prison,
 And puiten hem ther in penaunce · with-uten pite or grace,
 Bote 3if Dobest beede for hem · a-byde ther for euere! 96

Thus Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde
 Crounede on to beo kyng · and bi heor counseil worche,
 And rule the reame · bi red of hem alle,
 And otherwyse elles not · bute as thei threo assenten.' 100

I thonkede Thou3t tho · that he me so tau3te,
 'But 3it sauereth not me thi siggyng · so me God helpe,
 More kuynde knowyng · I coueyte to here,

That the eorl Auerous · heeld, and hus eires;
 And of Mammonaes moneye · mad hym meny frendes,
 And is ronne in-to religion · and rendreth hus byble, 88
 And precheth to the puple · seynt Poules wordes;

Libenter sufferitis insipientes, cum sitis ipsi sapientes;
 "3e worldliche wyse · vnwyse that 3e suffre,
 Lene hem and loue hem" · this Latyn ys to mene.

Dobest bere sholde · the bisshopes croce, 92
 And halye with the hoked ende · ille men to goode,
 And with the pyk putte adoüne · *preuaricatores legis*,
 Lordes that lyuen as hem lust · and no lawe a-counten;
 For here mok and here meeble · suche men thynken 96
 That no bisshop sholde · here byddinge with-sitte.
 Ac Dobest sholde nat dreden hem · bote do as god hihte,

Nolite timere eos qui possunt occidere corpus.

Thus Dowel and Dobet · diuinede, and Dobest,
 And crounede on to be kyng · to culle with-oute synne 100
 That wolde nat don as Dobest · diuinede and tauhte.
 Thus Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde
 Crounede on to be kyng · and kepen ous alle,
 And reulen alle reaumes · by here thre wittes; 104
 Bote other-wise ne elles nat · bote as thei three assented.'

Ich thonked Thouht tho · that he me so tauhte:
 '3ut sauereth me nat thi sawe,' quath ich · 'so me Crist spede,
 A more kynde knowyng · coueite ich to huyre 108

V has him feire · 3o. B. 89. moneie WCOB; mone LR. 104. kepin L. C. 93.
 3e IMFG; P om. 96. For IMFSG; And fore P. 98. hem IMFSG; hym P.

Hou Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest beth on eorthe.' 104
 'But Wit con wisse the,' quod Thouȝt · 'wher theos thre
 dwelleth,

Elles not no mon · that nou is alyue.

Thus Thouȝt and I also · throlly we eoden
 Disputyng on Dowel · day aftur other, 108
 And er we weoren war · with Wit conne we meeten.
 He was long and lene · to loken on ful symple,

How Dowel, Dobet, and Dobest · don amonges the peple.' 109
 'But Witte conne wisse the,' quod Thouȝt · 'where tho thre
 dwelle;

Ellis wote I none that can · that now is alyue.'

Thouȝte and I thus · thre days we ȝeden, 112
 Disputyng vppon Dowel · day after other,
 And ar we were ywar · with Witte gan we mete.
 He was longe and lene · liche to none other,
 Was no pruyde on his apparaille · ne pouerte noyther, 116
 Sadde of his semblaunt · and of soft chiere.

I dorste meue no matere · to make hym to Iangle,
 But as I bad Thouȝt tho · be mene bitwene,
 And put forth somme purpos · to prouen his wittes, 120
 What was Dowel fro Dobet · and Dobest fram hem bothe.

Thanne Thouȝt in that tyme · seide thise wordes,
 'Where Dowel, Dobet · and Dobest ben in londe,
 Here is Wille wolde ywyte · yif Witte couthe teche hym, 124
 And whether he be man or no man · this man fayne wolde
 aspye,

And worchen as thei thre wolde · this is his entente.'

A. 111. *This line is from T; also in H₁; VU om.* 114. But as I bad
 þouȝt þo · be mene betwene TH₁U; V has þouȝt bad, *omitting* I. 118. hym
 TH₁U; V *om.* B. 125. L *om.* no. C. 109. dobest MFS; ho dobest P;
 who do best E; who doþ best I. 112. Thouth P. 118. dorste IS;

Was no pride on his apparail · ne no pouert nother,
Sad of his semblaunt · and of softe speche. 112

I durste meue no mateere · to make him to iangle,
Bote as I bad Thouȝt tho · to beo mene bi-twene,
To putte forth sum purpos · to preuen his wittes.

Thenne Thouȝt that tyme · seide theose wordes, 116
'Wher Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest beoth in londe,
Oure Wille wolde i-witen · ȝif Wit couthe hym techen.'

Of Dowel and of Dobet · and Dobest of alle.'

'Bote Wit wolle the wisse,' quath Thouht · 'wher tho thre
dwellen;

Elles know ich non that can · in none kynriche.'

Thouht and ich thus thre daies · to-gederes we ȝeoden, 112
Disputyng vp Dowel · daye after othere;

And er we were ywar · with Wit gan we mete.

He was long and lene · lyke to non other,
Was no pruyde in hus aparail · ne pouerte nother; 116

Sad of hus semblant · with a softe speche.

Ich dorste meue no matere · to maken hym to iangle,

Bote as ich bad Thouht tho · be mene by-twene,

And putte forth som purpos · to prouen hus wittes, 120

What Dowel was fro Dobet · and Dobest fro hem bothe.

Thenne Thouht in that tyme · seide these wordes,

'Wher Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest ben in londe

Her is on wolde wite · yf Wit couthe teche, 124

And what lyues thei lyuen · and what lawe thei vsen;

What thei drede and douten · dere syre, telleth.'¹

durst FE; þurste P. 119, 122. thouth P. 120. proouen P. 122. þat
IMFSEG; þan P. seide MFG; seede P. þeese P. 123. Wher IMG;
War P. been P. 126. an (for and) P. douhten P.

¹ The Passus is continued on p. 265.

PASSUS X.

Passus primus de Dowel, &c.

‘SIRE Dowel dwelleth,’ quod Wit · ‘not a day hennes,
 In a castel, of Kuynde i-mad · of foure kunne thinges,
 Of erthe and eir hit is mad · i-medelet to-gedere,
 With wynt and with watur · ful wittiliche i-meint. 4
 Cuynde hath closet ther-in · craftiliche with-alle,
 A loueli lemmon · lyk to him-self,
Anima heo hette ; · to hire hath envye

PASSUS IX.

Passus nonus de visione ; et primus de Dowel.

‘SIRE Dowel dwelleth,’ quod Witte · ‘nouȝt a day hennes,
 In a castel that Kynde made · of foure kynnes thinges ;
 Of erthe and eyre is it made · medled togideres,
 With wynde and with water · witterly enioyned. 4
 Kynde hath closed there-inne · craftily with-alle,
 A lemman that he loueth · like to hym-selue,
Anima she hatte · ac Enuye hir hateth,
 A proude pryker of Fraunce · *prynceps huius mundi*, 8
 And wolde winne hir away · with wyles, and he myȝte.
 Ac Kynde knoweth this wel · and kepeth hir the bettere,
 And hath do hir with sire Dowel · is duke of this marches.
 Dobet is hir damoisele · sire Doweles douȝter, 12
 To serue this lady lelly · bothe late and rathe.
 Dobest is aboue bothe · a bisschopes pere ;
 That he bit, mote be do · he reuleth hem alle ;
Anima that lady · is ladde bi his lerynge. 16
 Ac the constable of that castel · that kepeth al the wacche,
 Is a wys kniȝte with-al · sire Inwitte he hatte,
 And hath fyue feyre sones · bi his first wyf ;
 Sire Sewel and Saywel · and Herewel the hende, 20

A proud prikere of Fraunce · *princeps huius mundi*, 8
 And wolde wynnen hire a-wei · with wiles ȝif he mihte.
 Bote Kuynde knoweth hit wel · and kepeth hire the betere,
 And hath i-don hire to sire Dowel · duke of these marches.
 Dobet is hire damysele · sire Doweles douȝter, 12
 And serueth that ladi lelly · bothe late and rathe.
 Thus Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest the thridde
 Beoth maystres of this manere · that mayden to kepen.
 But the cunstable of the castel · that kepeth hem alle, 16
 Is a wys kniht with-alle · sire Inwit he hette,
 And hath fyue feire sones · bi his furste wyf;
 Sire Seowel and Seywel · and Herewel the hende,

[*This Passus is continued from p. 263.*]

‘Syre Dowel dwelleth,’ quath Wit · ‘nat a daye hennes,
 In a castel that Kynde made · of foure kyne thynges; 128
 Of erthe, of aier yt is made · medled to-gederes,
 With wynd and water · wittilyche en-ioyned.
 Kynde hath closed ther-ynne · craftilyche with-alle
 A lemman that he loueth wel · lyke to hym-selue; 132
Anima hue hatte · to hure hath enuye
 A prout prikyere of Fraunce · *princeps huius mundi*,
 And wolde wynne hure away · with wiles, yf he myghte.
 And Kynde knoweth this wel · and kepeth hure the betere, 136
 And dooth hure with syre Dowel · duk of thes marches.
 Dobet ys here damsele · syre Doweles douhter,
 To serue that lady leelly · bothe late and rathe.
 Dobest ys a-boue bothe · a bisshopes peer, 140
 And by hus lerynge is ladde · that ilke lady *Anima*.
 The constable of that castel · that kepeth hem alle
 Is a wys knyght with-alle · syre Inwit he hatte;
 And hath fyue faire sones · by hus furste wyf, 144
 Syre Seewel, syre Seiwel · syre Huyrewel the hende,

V *om.* by mistake, owing to repetition of sire. 19. hende TUH₂; V *has* ende.
 C. 130. en-ioynede P.

Sire Worche-wel-with-thin-hond · a wiht mon of strengthe, 20
 And sire Godfrei Gowel · grete lordes alle.

Thcose sixe ben i-set · to saue the castel;
 To kepe this wommon · this wyse men ben charget,
 Til that Kuynde come or sende · and kepe hire himseluen.' 24

'What calle ȝe the castel,' quod I · 'that Kuynde hath I-maket,
 And what cunnes thing is Kuynde · con ȝe me telle?'

'Kuynde,' quath he, 'is creatour · of alle kunne beestes,
 Fader and foormere · the furste of alle thing; 28

Sire Worche-wel-wyth-thine-hande · a wizte man of strengthe,
 And sire Godfrey Gowel · gret lordes for sothe.

Thise fyue ben sette · to saue this lady *Anima*,
 Tyl Kynde come or sende · to saue hir for euere.' 24

'What kynnes thyng is Kynde,' quod I · 'canstow me telle?'

'Kynde,' quod Witte, 'is a creatour · of alle kynnes thinges;
 Fader and fourmour · of al that euere was maked;

And that is the gret god · that gynnyng had neuere, 28

Lorde of lyf and of lyȝte · of lysse and of peyne.

Angeles and al thing · aren at his wille.

Ac man is hym moste lyke · of marke and of schafte;

For thorough the worde that he spake · wexen forth bestes, 32

Dixit, et facta sunt;

And made man likkest · to hym-self one,

And Eue of his ribbe-bon · with-uten eny mene.

For he was synguler hym-self · and seyde *faciamus*,

As who seith, 'more mote here-to · than my worde one; 36

My myȝte mote helpe · now with my speche.'

Riȝte as a lorde sholde make lettres · and hym lakked parchemyn,

Though he couth write neuere so wel · ȝif he had no penne,

The lettres for al the lordship · I leue, were neuere ymaked. 40

And so it semeth bi hym · as the bible telleth,

There he seyde, *dixit, et facta sunt;*

He moste worche with his worde · and his witte shewe.

And in this manere was man made · thorough myȝte of god
 almiȝti,

With his worde and werkemanschip · and with lyf to laste. 44

And thus god gaf hym a goost · of the godhed of heuene,

And of his grete grace · graunted hym blisse,

And that is lyf that ay shal last · to al his lynage after.

That is the grete god · that bigynnyng hedde neuere,
 The lord of lyf and of liht · of lisse and of peyne.
 Angeles and alle thing · arn at his wille,
 Bote mon is him most lyk · of marke and of schap; 32
 For with word that he warp · woxen forth beestes,
 And alle thing at his wille · was wrouzt with a speche,
Dixit et facta sunt;
 Saue mon that he made · ymage to him-seluen,
 3af him goost of his godhede · and grauntede him blisse, 36
 Lyf that euer schal lasten · and al his lynage astur.

Syre Worchewel with thyn hand · a wight man of strengthe,
 And syre Godfaith Gowel · grete lordes alle.
 These fyue ben ysett · for to saue *Anima*, 148
 Til Kynde come other sende · and kepe hure hym-self.
 ‘What lyues thyng is Kynde?’ quath ich · ‘canst thow me
 telle?’
 ‘Kynde is a creator,’ quath Wit · ‘of alle kyne thynges,
 Fader and formour · of al that forth groweth, 152
 The whiche is god grettest · that gynnyng hadde neuere,
 Lord of lyf and of lyght · of lysse and of payne.
 Angeles and alle thyng · aren at hus wil;
 Man is hym most lyk · of membres and of face, 156
 And semblable in soule to god · bote yf synne hit make.

A. 27. ceatour V. bestis TU; V *has* best; *but see* l. 33. 30. lisse TH₁; blisse VU. 31. arn TUH₁; ben V. B. 40. lettres O; lettre LWCRB. 47. his WR; LCOB *om.* C. 149. seynde P. 150. canst FMS; can P. 151. a creator MS; creature P.

After the grace of god · the gretteste is Inwit. 48
 Inwit in the hed is · and helpeth the soule,
 For thorw his connyng he kepeth · *Caro et Anima*
 In rule and in reson · bote recheles hit make.
 He eggeth the eize-siht · and herynge to goode, 52
 Of good speche and of cunnyng · he is the biginnere,
 In monnes brayn he is most · and mihtiest to knowe,
 Ther he is bremest · but ȝif blod hit make.
 For whonne blod is bremore then brayn · then is Inwit i-bounde,
 And eke wantoun and wyld · withouten eny resoun. 57

And as thow suxt the sonne · som tyme for cloudes
 May nat shyne ne shewe · on shawes on erthe,
 Right so letteth lecherie · and other luther synnes, 160
 That god suweth nat synful men · and suffreth hem mysfare,
 As somme hongen hem-self · and other while a-drencheth ;
 God wol nat of hem wite · bote leteth hem yworthe,
 As the sauter seith · by such synful shrewes, 164

Et dimisi eos secundum desideria cordis eorum.

Loke ! suche luther men · lome ben ryche
 Of golde and of other good · ac godes grace hem failleth ;
 For thei loueth and by-leyueth · al here lyf-tyme
 More in catel than in Kynde · that alle kyne thynges wroghte, 168
 The whiche is bothe loue and lyf · and lasteth withouten ende.

Inwitt and alle wittes · closed ben ther-ynne ;
 By loue and by leaute · ther-by lyueth *Anima* ;
 And Lyf lyueth by Inwitt · and lerynge of Kynde. 172
 Inwitt is in the hefd · as *Anima* in the herte,
 And mucche wo worth hym · that Inwitt mys-speyneth.
 For that is godes owen good · hus grace and hus tresoure,
 That meny lede leeseth · thorw lykerouse drynke, 176
 As Lot dude and Noe ; · and *Herodes* the daffe
 ȝaf hus douhter for a daunsyng · in a dissh the hefde
 Of the blessyde baptiste · by-fore alle hus gustes.
 Every man that hath Ynwitt · and hus hele bothe, 180
 Hath tresour ynow in treuthe · to fynde with hym-selue.

written for iye or eiye. C. 164. *desideria* IMFG ; *desiderium* P. *cordis*
 EF ; P om. 166. This line is from IMFSG ; PE omit it. 173.
 P om. 2nd in. 177. an (for and and) P. 178. P om. 1st a.

In 3onge fauntes and fooles · with hem fayleth Inwit,
 And eke in sottes thou miht seo · that sitteth atte ale ;
 Thei heldeth ale in heore hed · til Inwit beo a-dreynt, 60
 And ben brayn-wode as beestes · so heore blod waxeth.

Thenne hath the pouke pouwer · sire *princeps huius mundi*,
 Ouer suche maner men · miht in heore soules.
 Bote in fauntes ne in fooles · the fend hath no miht 64
 For no werk that thei worchen · wikked or elles ;

Foles that fauten Inwitte · I fynde that holicherche
 Shulde fynden hem that hem fauteth · and faderelees children ;
 And wydwes that han nouzte wher-with · to wynnen hem her
 fode, 68

Madde men, and maydenes · that helplees were ;
 Alle thise lakken Inwitte · and lore bihoueth.

Of this matere I myzte · make a longe tale,
 And fynde fele witnesses · amonges the foure doctours, 72
 And that I lye nouzt of that I lere the · Luke bereth witnesse.

Godfader and godmoder · that sen her godchildren
 At myseise and at mischief · and mowe hem amende,
 Shal haue penaunce in purgatorie · but 3if thei hem helpe. 76
 For more bilongeth to the litel barne · ar he the lawe knowe,
 Than nempnyng of a name · and he neuere the wiser !
 Shulde no Crystene creature · crien atte 3ate,
 Ne faille payn ne potage · and prelates did as thei shulden. 80
 A Iuwe wolde nouzte se a Iuwe · go Iangelyng for defaute,
 For alle the moebles on this molde · and he amende it mizte.

Allas ! that a Cristene creature · shal be vnkynde til an other,
 Sitthen Iuwes, that we Iugge · Iudas felawes, 84
 Ayther of hem helpeth other · of that that hym nedeth.
 Whi nel we Cristene · of Cristes good be as kynde
 As Iuwes, that ben owre lores-men ? · shame to vs alle !
 The comune for her vnkyndenesse · I drede me, shul aby. 88

Bisschopes shul be blamed · for beggeres sake ;
 He is worse than Iudas · that 3iueth a Iaper siluer,
 And biddeth the begger go · for his broke clothes :

*Proditor est prelatus cum Iuda, qui patrimonium Christi
 minus distribuit : et alibi :*

*Perniciosus dispensator est, qui res pauperum Christi inuti-
 liter consumit.*

Bote the fadres and the frendes · for fauntes schul be blamet
 Bote thei witen hem from wantounesse · whil that thei ben 3onge.

And 3if that thei ben pore or catelles · to kepen hem from ille,
 Thenne is holy chirche a-signet · to helpen hem and sauen 69
 From folyes, and fynden hem · til that thei ben wysore.

Bote vche w3t in this world · that hath wys vnderstondinge,
 Is cheef souereyn of him-self · his soule for to 3eme, 72
 And cheuesschen him from charge · whon he childhode passeth,

Ac fauntekynes and fooles · the whiche fauten Inwitt,
 Frendes schulden fynden hem · and fro folye kepe,
 And holychurche helpe to · so sholde no man begge, 184

A. 59. sottes UTH₂; wrecches V. 61. ben TU; V *om.* 66. fauntes
 TU; fautes V. 71. w3t T; wight U; mon V. 72. of H₂; ouer TU;
 V *om.* B. 67. fauteth RCOB; fauted LW. 83. crestene L. C. 183.
 schulden M; schold S; schal I; schulle G; schul F; suche PE.

Saue him-self from sunne · for so him bi-houeth ;
 For worche he wel other wrong · the wit is his ounē.
 Thene is Dowel a duyk · that distruieth vices, 76
 And saueth the soule · that sunne hath no miht
 To route ne to reste · ne to rooten in the herte ;
 And that is drede of god · for Dowel hit maketh,
 Hit is biginnyngē of goodnesse · god for to drede ; 80
 Salamon it seide · for a soth tale,

Innecium sapiencie, timor domini.

For doute, men doth the bet ; · Drede is such a mayster
 That he maketh men meoke · and mylde of heore speche,
 And alle kunne scolers · in scoles forte lerne ; 84
 Thenne is Dobet to beo war · for betyngē of 3erdes,
 And therof seith the sauter · thi-seluen thou miht reden,

Virga tua et baculus tuus, ipsa me consolata sunt.

Ac 3if clene consience acorde · that thi-selfe dost wel,
 Wilne thou neuere in this world · forte Dobetere ; 88

He doth nouȝt wel that doth thus · ne drat nouȝt god almiȝty,
 Ne loueth nouȝt Salamones sawes · that Sapience tauȝte ; 93

Inicium sapiencie, timor domini :

That dredeth god, he doth wel ; · that dredeth hym for loue,
 And nouȝt for drede of veniaunce · doth ther-fore the bettere ;
 He doth best, that with-draweth hym · by day and bi nyȝte 96
 To spille any speche · or any space of tyme ;

Qui offendit in vno, in omnibus est reus.

Lesyng of tyme · treulhe wote the sothe !
 Is moste yhated vp erthe · of hem that beth in heuene,
 And sitthe to spille speche · that spyre is of grace, 100
 And goddes gleman · and a game of heuene ;
 Wolde neuere the faithful fader · his fithel were vntempred,
 Ne his gleman a gedelyngē · a goer to tauernes !

To alle trew tidy men · that trauaille desyren, 104
 Owre lorde loueth hem and lent · loude other stille,
 Grace to go to hem · and agon her lyflode ;

Inquirentes autem dominum non minuentur omni bono.

A. 81. This line is from T. 86. et—sunt ; from TU ; V om. 87.
 This line is from T ; V has a corrupt line, Bote clene concience acorde ·
 bote ȝi-self Dowel. 88. indicat hominem TUH₂ ; V indistinct. 92. Qui

For, *Intencio indicat hominem.*

Bi conseil of Concience · a-cordynge with holy churchē,
 Loke thou wisse thi wit · and thi werkes aftur;
 For ȝif thou comest aȝein Concience · thou cumbrest thiseluen,
 And so witnesseth godes word · and holiwrit bothe; 92

Qui agit contra conscientiam, edificat ad iehennam.

Bote ȝif thou worche bi godus word · I warne the for the beste,
 What so men worden of the · wratthe the neuere;
 Catoun counseileth so · tak kepe of his teching,

Cum recte viuas, ne cures verba malorum;

Bote suffre and sitte stille · and sech thou no furre, 96
 And beo glad of the grace · that god hath the i-sent;
 For ȝif thou cumse to clymbe · and coueyte herre,
 Thou miht leose thi lounesse · for a luitel pruyde.
 I haue lerned how lewede men · han lered heore children, 100
 That selden moseth the marbelston · that men ofte treden;
 And riht so walkers · that walken a-bouten
 From religion to religion · recheles ben thei euere.

Ne spille speche ne tyme · ne myspende neither
 Meeble ne vnmeeble · mete nother drynke.
 And thanne dude we alle wel · and ȝut wel bet to louye
 Oure enemyes entyrelliche · and help hem at here neede. 188
 And ȝut were best to bee aboute · and brynge hit to hepe,
 That alle londes loueden · and in on lawe by-leouede.
 Bisshopes sholde be here-aboute · and brynge this to hepe,
 For to leese there-fore here londe · and here lyf after. 192
 The catel that Crist hadde · thre clothes hit were,
 Ther-of was he ryfled · and robbed er he deyede;
 After that he les hus lyf · for lawe sholde loue wexe.
 Prelates and preestes · and princes of holy churchē 196
 Sholde doute no deth · nother dere ȝeres,
 To wenden as wyde · as the worlde were,
 To tulien the erthe with tonge · and teche men to louye;
 For ho so loueth, leyue hit wel · god wol nat lete hym sterue 200
 In myschef for lacke of mete · ne for myssynge of clothes;

Inquirentes autem dominum non minuentur omni bono.

—*iehennam*; from U. 95. kepe UTH₂; hede V. B. 97. *vno* WCOB;
verbo LR; see B. xi. 301. C. 190. loueden IMFE; lyueden P. an (*for*
 and) P. 194. he IMFEG; P *om.* ryfede P. 199. eerthe P.

And men that cunne mony craftes · clergie hit telleth, 104
Thrust or theodam with hem · selden is i-seye;

Qui circuit omne genus, nullius est generis.

Poul the apostel · in his pistel wrot
In ensauple of suche · rennars a-boute,
And for wisdam is writen · as witnesseth clerkes, 108

In ea vocacione qua vocati estis, in eadem permaneat.

ȝif thou beo mon i-mariet · monk, othur chanoun,
Hold the stable and studefast · and strengthe thi-seluen
To beo blesset for thi beryng · ȝe, beggere thauh thou weore!

Loke thou grucche not on god · thauȝ he the ȝeue luytel, 112
Beo payed with thi porcion · porore or ricchore.

Thus in drede lyth Dowel · and Dobet to soffren,
For thorw soffraunce seo thou miht · hou souereynes ariseth;

Qui se humiliat, exaltabitur, &c.;

And so lerede vs Luc · that lyȝede neuere. 116

And thus of drede and his dede · Dobest aryseth,
Whuch is flour and fruit · i-fostred of bothe.

Riht as the rose · that red is and swote,
Out of a ragged roote · and of rouwe breres 120
Springeth and spredeth · that spicers desyreth.

Or as whete out of a weod · waxeth vppon eorthe,
So Dobest out of Dowel · and Dobet doth springe

Trewe wedded libbing folk · in this worlde is Dowel; 107
For thei mote worche and wyne · and the worlde susteyne.
For of her kynde thei come · that confessoures ben nempned,
Kynges and kniztes · kayseres and cherles,
Maydenes and martires · out of o man come.

The wyf was made the weye · for to help worche, 112
And thus was wedloke ywrouȝt · with a mene persone;
First bi the faderes wille · and the frendes conseilte,
And sytthenes bi assent of hem-self · as thei two myȝte acorde.
And thus was wedloke ywrouȝt · and god hym-self it made;
In erthe the heuene is · hym-self was the witnesse. 117

Ac fals folke faithlees · theues and lieres,
Wastoures and wrecches · out of wedloke, I trowe,
Conceyued ben in yuel tyme · as Caym was on Eue. 120
Of such synful shrewes · the sauter maketh mynde,

Concepit in dolore, et peperit iniquitatem, &c.:

A-mong men of this molde · that meke ben, or kuynde; 124
 For loue of heore lounnesse · vr lord ȝiueth hem grace
 Such werkes to worche · that he is with apayet.
 Furst and foreward · to folk that ben i-weddet,
 And libbeth as heore lawe wole · hit liketh God almihti; 128
 For thorw wedlac the world stont · hose wol hit i-knowe.
 Thei ben ricchest in reame · and the rote of Dowel;
 For of heore kuynde thei come · that confessours beth nempned,
 Bothe maydens and martires · monkes and ancras, 132
 Kynges and knihtes · and alle cunne clerkes,
 Barouns and burgeis · and bonde men of tounes.

Fals folk and feithles · theoues and lyzers
 Ben conseyuēt in curset tyme · as Caym was on Eue, 136
 After that Adam and Eue · hedden eten of the appel
 Aȝeyn the heste of him · that hem of nouȝt made.

An angel in haste · thennes hem tornde
 In-to this wrecchede world · to wonen and to libben 140
 In tene and in trauaile · to here lyues ende;
 In that corsede constellacion · thei knewen to-gedere,
 And brouȝten forth a barn · that muche bale wrouȝte.

Caym men cleped him · in cursed tyme engendret, 144
 And so seith the sauter · seo hit whon the liketh,

Concepit in dolore, et peperit iniquitatem, &c.

Ho so lyueth in lawe · and in loue doth wel
 As these weddid men · that this worlde susteynen?
 For of here kynde thei come · confessours and martyres, 204
 Patriarkes and prophetes · popes and maidenens.
 For god seith hit hym-self · “shal neuere good appel
 Thorw no sotel science · on sour stock growe;”
 And hit ys no more to mene · bote men that buth bygetyn 208
 Out of matrimonie nat moillere · mowe nat haue the grace
 That leelle legitime · by lawe may cleyme.
 And that my sawe be soth · the sauter bereth witnesse,

Concepit in dolore, et peperit iniquitatem.

A. 105. *nullius—generis* U; V *om.* 108. *In—permaneat* U; V *om.*
 115. *souereyn* V; *soueraynes* TU. *exaltabitur, &c.* is from T. 124. *molde* TU;
 world V. 132. *an (for and)* V. 141. *This line is from* U. 143. *a barn* TU;
 barnes V. wrouȝte TU; wrouȝten V; *cf. next line.* 145. *et—&c.* from T.
 C. 203. *theese* P. 204. *martyres* MIFSG; *maistres* PE. 205. *maidones* P.
After l. 207, S *adds*: Nothur an a bytur brom · wex broune beryus.

And com to Noe anon · and bad him not lette
 Swithe to schapen a schup · of schides and bordes; 160
 Him-self and his sones thre · and seththen heore wyues,
 Bringen hem to the bot · and byden ther-inne,
 Til fourti dawes ben folfuld · that the flod haue i-wassche
 Clene away the cursede blod · that Caym hath i-maket. 164
 “Beestes that now ben · mouwen banne the tyme
 That euere that cursede Caym · com vppon eorthe;
 Alle schulen dye for his dedes · bi dounes and hulles,
 Bothe fisch and foules · forth with other beestes, 168
 Out-taken eihte soules · and of vche beest a couple,
 That in the schynglede schup · schullen ben i-saued;
 Elles schal al dye · and to helle weende.”

Caym the cursed creature · conceyued was in synne, 212
 After that Adam and Eue · hadden ysynged;
 With-oute repentaunce · of here rechelesnesse,
 A rybaud thei engendrede · and a gome vnryghtful.
 As an hewe that ereth nat · aunteth hym to sowe 216
 On a leye-lond · a-zens hus lordes wille,
 So was Caym conceyued · and so been cursed wrecches,
 That lycame han a-zen the lawe · that oure lorde ordeynede.
 Alle that come of Caym · caytyues were euere, 220
 And for the synne of Caymes sed · seyde god to Noe,
Penitet me fecisse hominem;
 And bad shape hym a schip · of shides and of bordes,
 “Thy-selue and thy sones three · and sitthen ȝoure wyues,
 Buske ȝow to that bot · and a-bydeth ther-ynne 224
 Tyl fourty dayes be fulfilled · and the flod haue wasshe
 Clene away the cursede blod · that of Cayme ys spronge.
 Bestes that now beeth · banne shulleth the tyme
 That euere that cursed Cayme · cam on this erthe; 228
 Alle shullen deye for hus dedes · by dales and hulles,
 And the foules that flen · forth with othere bestes,
 Except onliche · of eche kynde a peyre,
 That in thy shynglede schip · with the shal be saued.” 232

LCROB *om.* 139. forth CWROB; for L. C. 214. rechelesnesse P.
 216. hewe IG; hywe P. 222. schip IMFSG; shup P. 224. and IMF;
 P *om.* 225. þe M; PEIFSG *om.* 232. schip MFS; shup P.

Thus thorw cursede Caym · com care vppon alle; 172
 For Seth and his suster children · spouseden either other,
 Aȝeyn the lawe of vr lord · lyȝen to-gedere,
 And weoren maried at mischef · as men doth now heore
 children.

Here abouȝte the barne · the belsyres gultes,
 And alle for her forfadres · thei ferden the worse.
 The gospel is here-ageine · in o degre, I fynde, 144
*Filius non portabit iniquitatem patris, et pater non portabit
 iniquitatem filii, &c.*

Ac I fynde, if the fader · be false and a shrewe,
 That somdel the sone · shal haue the sires tacches.
 Impe on an ellerne · and if thine apple be swete,
 Mochel merueile me thynketh · and more of a schrewe, 148
 That bryngeth forth any barne · but if he be the same,
 And haue a sauoure after the sire · selde seestow other;

Numquam colligimus de spinis vuas, nec de tribulis fycus.
 And thus thourw cursed Caym · cam care vppon erthe;
 And al for thei wrouȝt wedlokes · aȝein goddis wille. 152
 For-thi haue thei maugre for here mariages · that marye so her
 childeren;

For some, as I se now · soth for to telle,
 For coueitise of catel · vnkyndeliche ben wedded.
 As careful concepcioun · cometh of suche mariages, 156
 As bifel of the folke · that I bifore of tolde.
 For goode shulde wedde goode · though hij no good hadde;
 “I am *via et veritas*,” seith Cryst · “I may auaunce alle.”

It is an oncomely couple · bi Cryst, as me thinketh, 160
 To ȝyuen a ȝonge wenche · to an olde feble,
 Or wedden any widwe · for welth of hir goodis,
 That neuere shal barne bere · but if it be in armes!

A. 173. Seth; Sem VT; see l. 148. B. 142. abouȝte WCRB; about L.
 150. *colligimus* COB; *colligitur* LWR. C. 233. aboute P. 235. *im-*
portabit P. *nec—filij*; in M only. 238. fore P. (1st) þe EMFSG; P om.
 248. engendrede P. 256. now EMIFS; P om. 257. chapman P.

For summe, as I seo nou · soth for to tellen, 176
 For couetise of catel · vnkuyndeliche beoth married,
 And careful concepcion · cometh of such weddyng,
 Also bifel of that folk · that I beo-fore schewede.

Hit is an vn-comely couple · be Cryst, as me thinketh, 180
 To ȝeuen a ȝong wenche · to an old feble mon,
 Or to wedden an old widewe · for weolthe of hire goodes,
 That neuer schal child bere · bote hit beo in hire armes!

Here abouȝte the barn · hus belsires gultes,
 And alle for here for-fadres · ferdene the worse.
 The godspel ys her-ageyn · as gomes may reden,
Filius non portabit iniquitatem patris, nec pater iniquitatem filij.

Holy writ wittnesseth · that for no wickede dede 236
 That the sire hym-self doth · by hus owene wil,
 The sone for the syres synne · sholde nat be the werse.
 West-mynster lawe, ich wot wel · worcheth the contrarie;
 For thauh the fader be a frankelayne · and for a felon be
 hanged, 240

The heritage that the air sholde haue · ys at the kynges wille.
 Ac the godspel ys a glose there · hudyngge the greythe treuthe;
 For god seide ensample · of suche manere iss hue,
 That kynde folweth kynde · and contrarieth neuere; 244
*Nunquam colligunt de spinis uuas: et alibi, Bona arbor
 bonum fructum facit.*

Ac whi the worlde was a-drent · holy writ telleth,
 Was for mariages of man-kynde · that men maden that tyme.
 After that Caym the cursede · hadde culled Abel,
 Seth, Adames sone · sitthen was engendred. 248
 And god sente to Seth · so sone he was of age,* [*Cf. p. 276.]
 That—for no kyne catel · ne no kyne byheste
 Suffren hus seed seeden · with Caymes seed hus brother.
 And for that Seth suffrede hit · god seide, “me forthynketh 252
 That ich man made · othere matrimonye suffrede;
 For good sholde wedden good · thauh thei no good hadde,
 For ich am *uia et ueritas* · and may auaunce hem alle.”

Ac fewe folke now folweth this · for thei ȝeueþ here children
 For couetise of catel · and connyngge chapmen; 257
 Of kyn ne of kynredene · a-counteth men bote lytel.

In Ielesye Ioyeles · and Ianglynge in bedde 184
 Mony peire seththen the pestilence · han pliht hem to-gedere;
 The fruit that thei bringen forth · ben mony foule wordes,
 Han thei none children bote chestes · and choppes hem bitwene.
 Thauȝ thei don hem to Donmowe · but the deuel helpe 188
 To folwen astur the flucchen · fecche thei hit neuere;

Many a peire sithen the pestilence · han plizt hem togideres;
 The fruit that thei brynge forth · aren foule wordes, 165
 In Ialousye Ioyeles · and Ianglyng on bedde.
 Haue thei no children but cheste · and choppyng hem bitwene.
 And though thei don hem to Donmowe · but if the deuel help
 To folwen after the flicche · fecche thei it neuere; 169
 And but thei bothe be forsworne · that bacoun thei tyne.

For-thi I conseilte alle Crystene · coueite nouȝt be wedded
 For coueitise of catel · ne of kynrede riche. 172
 Ac maydenes and maydenes · macche ȝow togideres,
 Widwes and widwers · worcheth the same.
 For no londes, but for loue · loke ȝe be wedded,
 And thanne gete ȝe the grace of god · and good ynogh to lyue
 with. 176

And euery maner secular · that may nouȝt continue,
 Wysly go wedde · and war hym fro synne;
 For leccherye in likyng · is lymeȝerde of helle.
 Whiles thow art ȝonge · and thi wepne kene, 180
 Wreke the with wyuyng · ȝif thow wilt ben excused.
Dum sis vir fortis · ne des tua robora scortis,
Scribitur in portis · meretrix est ianua mortis.

A. 188. donmowe—helpe, from U; V has done · al þat þei mowen; *where*
 done *and* mowen are corrupted from donmowe. 190. that—tyne TUH;
 and cursen that tyme V. 193. maidenis · macche ȝow ysamme T; V has
 vnmaydens · clene ow save. 194. werchip riȝt T; V has worschupeȝ.
 B. 167. an (*for* and) L. 181. wilt O; wolt WCB; wil L. C. 260.
 ymanerede P. yspronge EIMFSG; spronge P. 269. watel PE; walet IMF.
 271. *This line is in F only.* 273. lelly SMG; sothliche PE. 281.
 maidones P. 283. noobles P. 287. ert P.

Bote 3if thei bothe ben forswore · that bacoun thei tyne.

Forthi I counseile alle Cristene · coueite not ben i-weddet
For couetyse of catel · ne of kun riche; 192
Bote maydens and maydens · maccheth ou ysamme,
Widewers and widewes · wercheth rizt also,
And thenne glade 3e god · that alle goodes sendeth!

Thauh hue be loueliche to loken on · and lofsom a bedde,
A mayde wel ymanered · of good men yspronge, 260
Bote hue haue eny other good · haue hure wol no ryche.
Ac let hure be vnloueliche · vnlofsom a bedde,
A bastarde, a bounde on · a begeneldes doubter,
That no curtesye can · bote let hure be knowe 264
For ryche other wel yrented · thauh hue reuely for elde,
Ther nys squier ne knyght · in contreye a-boute,
That he nel bowe to that bonde · to bede hure an hosebonde,
And wedden hure for hure welthe · and wisshen on the morwe
That hus wyf were wex · other a watel-ful of nobles. 269
In gelesie Ioye-less · and Ianglynge a bedde
Thei lyue here lif vnlouely · til deth hem departe.

Meny peire sitthe the pestilence-tyme · han plight treuthe to
louye, 272

Ac thei lyen lelly · here nother loueth othere.
The frut that thei bryngen forth · aren meny foule wordes;
Thei han no children bote cheste · and choppes hem by-twyne.
Thauh thei don hem to Donemowe · bote the deuel hem helpe
To folwen for the flicche · feccheth thei hit neuere; 277
Bote thei bothe be for-swore · that bacon thei tyne.

For-thi ich counseile alle Crystine · coueite neuere be wedded
For couetise of catel · in no kynne wyse; 280
Bote maydenes and maydenes · marieth 3ow to-gederes;
And wydewers and wydewes · weddeth ayther othere,
And loke that loue be more the cause · than lond other nobles.

And euerech manere seculer man · that may nat contynue,
Wisliche go wedde · and war the fro that synne 285
That lecherye is, a lykynge thyng · and lym-3erde of helle.
And whil thow art 3ong and 3ep · and thy wepne kene,
Awreke the therwith on wyuynge · for godes werk ich holde hit:
Dum sis uir fortis · ne des tua robora scortis, 289
Scribitur in portis · meretrix est iamua mortis.

For in vn-tyme treweli · bi-twene mon and wommon 196
 Schulde no bed-bourde be · bote bothe weore clene
 Of lyf and eke in loue · and in lawe alse.
 That deede derne · do no mon scholde,
 As is vset, bi-twene · sengle and sengle; 200
 Seththen lawe hath i-loket · that vche mon haue a make
 In mariage and matrimoyne · i-medlet to-gedere,
 And worche that with his wyf · and with no wommon elles.
 That other-gates ben i-geten · for gadelynges ben holden, 204

Whan 3e haue wyued, bewar · and worcheth in tyme; 184
 Nouzt as Adam and Eue · whan Caym was engendred.
 For in vntyme, trewli · bitwene man and womman,
 Ne shulde no bourde on bedde be; · but-if thei bothe were
 clene
 Bothe of lyf and of soule · and in parfyte charitee, 188
 That ilke derne dede · do noman ne sholde.
 And if thei leden thus her lyf · it liketh god almizti;
 For he made wedloke firste · and him-self it seide;

*Bonum est ut unusquisque uxorem suam habeat, propter for-
 nicacionem.*

And thei that othergatis ben geten · for gedelynges ben holden,
 As false folke fondelynges · faitoures and lyars; 193
 Vngracious to gete goode · or loue of the poeple,
 Wandren and wasten · what thei cacche mowe.
 Azeines Dowel thei don yuel · and the deuel serue, 196
 And after her deth-day · shulle dwelle with the same,
 But god gyue hem grace here · hem-self to amende.

Dowel, my frende, is · to don as lawe techeth,
 To loue thi frende and thi foo · leue me, that is Dobet. 200
 To 3iuen and to 3emen · bothe 3onge and olde,
 To helen and to helpen · is Dobest of alle.
 And Dowel is to drede god · and Dobet to suffre,
 And so cometh Dobest of bothe · and bryngeth adoun the mody,
 And that is wikked Wille · that many werke shendeth, 205
 And dryueth away Dowel · thorough dedliche synnes.'

A. 204, 205. V has only one line, þat oþergates ben I-geten · ben fyndlynges
 and lyzers; I here follow T^UH₂. 213. werke H₂T; men V. B. 190.

That ben false folke and false heires · fyndlynges and lyzers,
 Vn-gracios to gete loue · or eni good elles,
 Bote wandren as wolues · and wasten ȝif thei mouwen.
 A-ȝeyn Dowel thei don vuele · and the deuel plesen, 208
 And astur heore deth-day · schul dwelle with the schrewe,
 Bute god ȝiue hem grace · heer to a-mende.

Thenne is Dowel to dredren · and Dobet to suffren,
 And so cometh Dobest aboute · and bringeth a-doun modi, 212
 And that is wikkede Wil · that mony werke schendeth.'

ȝe that han wyues, beth war · worcheth nat out of tyme,
 As Adam dude and Eue · as ich whil er tolde. 292

For sholde no bed-borde be · bote-yf thei bothe were

Clene of lyf and loue in saule · and in leel wedlok.
 For that derne dede · do no man sholde
 Bote wedded men with here wyues · as holy writ telleth; 296

*Bonum est ut unusquisque uxorem suam habeat, propter
 fornicacionem.*

That othere-gates been gete · for gadelynges aren holde,
 And fals folke and foundlynges · faitours and lyers,
 Vngraciouse to gete good · othere good loue of puple,
 A-waytynge and wastynge · al that thei cacche mowe; 300
 A-ȝens Dowel thei don vuele · and the deuel seruen,
 And after here deth-daye · dwellen shulle in helle,
 Bote god gyue hem grace · her goynge to amende.

And thus ys Dowel, my frend · to do as lawe techeth, 304
 To louye and to lowe the · and no lyf to greue.
 Ac to louye and to lene · leyf me, that is Dobet;
 Ac to ȝeue and to ȝeme · bothe ȝonge and olde,
 Helen and helpen · is Dobest of all. 308

For the more a man may do · by so that he do hit,
 The more is he worth and worthi · of wyse and goode ypreised.'

Hic explicit passus primus de Dowel.

PASSUS XI.

Passus secundus de Dowel, &c.

THENNE hedde Wit a wyf · was hoten dam Studie,
 That lene was of lich · and of loub chere.
 Heo was wonderliche wroth · that Wit me thus tauhte,
 And al starinde dam Studie · steorneliche seide, 4
 ‘Wel artou witti,’ quod heo · ‘wisdom to telle
 To fayturs or to fooles · that frentik ben of wittes!’
 And blamede him for his beere · and bad him beo stille

PASSUS X.

Passus decimus de visione, et secundus de Dowel.

THANNE hadde Witte a wyf · was hote dame Studye,
 That lene was of lere · and of liche bothe.
 She was wonderly wroth · that Witte me thus tauzte,
 And al starynge dame Studye · sternelich seyde, 4
 ‘Wel artow wyse,’ quod she to Witte · ‘any wysdomes to telle
 To flatereres or to folis · that frantyk ben of wittes!’
 And blamed hym and banned hym · and badde hym be style,
 With suche wise wordes · to wissen any sottes; 8
 And seyde, ‘*noli mittere*, man · margerye-perlis
 Amanges hogges, that han · hawes at wille.
 Thei don but dryuele ther-on · draffe were hem leuere
 Than al the precious perre · that in paradys wexeth. 12
 I sey it bi suche,’ quod she · ‘that sheweth bi her werkes,
 That hem were leuer londe · and lordship on erthe,
 Or ricchesse or rentis · and reste at her wille,
 Than alle the sothe sawes · that Salamon seyde euere. 16
 Wisdome and witte now · is nouzt worth a carse,
 But if it be carded with coueytise · as clotheres kember here wolle.
 Who-so can contreue deceytes · and conspire wronges,
 And lede forth a loue-day · to latte with treuthe; 20

With suche wyse wordes · to wisse eny fooles. 8
 And seide, '*noli mittere* · margeri-perles
 Among hogges that han · hawes at heore wille;
 Thei don bot drauele theron · draf weore hem leuere
 Then al the presciouse peerles · that in paradys waxen. 12
 I sigge hit bi thulke,' quod heo · 'that bi heore werkes schewen
 That hem weore leuere lond · and lordschupe on eorthe,
 Richesse, rentes · or reste at heore wille
 Then al the soth sawes · that Salamon seide euere. 16
 Wisdam and wit nou · is not worth a russche
 But hit beo cardet with couetise · as clothers doth heor wolle,
 That conterfeteth disseites · and conspirer wronges,
 And ledeth forth a loueday · to lette the trewthe; 20

PASSUS XII.

Incipit passus secundus de Dowel.

THENNE hadde Wit a wif · was hote dame Studie,
 That ful lene lokede · and lif-holy semede;
 Hue was wonderliche worth · that Wit so me tauhte.
 Al starynge dame Studie · sterneliche seide, 4
 'Wel art thou wys,' quath hue to Wit · 'suche wisdom to
 shewe
 To eny fol other flaterere · other to frentik puple;'
 And seide, '*nolite mittere*, 3e men · margerie-perles
 A-monge hogges that hauen · hawes at wille; 8
 Thei don bote dreuele theron · draf were hem leuere
 Than al the precieuse perreye · that eny prince weldeth.
 Ich segge hit by suche,' quath Studie · 'that shewen by here
 werkus,
 Thei loueth lond and lordshup · and lykyng of body more 12
 Than holynesse other hendenesse · other al that seintes techeth.
 Wysdom and wit now · is nat worth a carse
 Bote hit be carded with couetyse · as clothers kembern wolle.
 Ho that can contreeue and caste · to deceyue the puple, 16
 And lette with a loueday · treuthe, and by-gyle hym,

20. trewethe V. B. 19. an (*for* and) L. C. 4. starynge P. sturneliche P.
 5. (2nd) to IMFSEG; P *om.* 9. dreuelyn P. 12. Thei M; That PEIFSK.

That suche craftes cunnen · to counseil beoth i-clept,
And ben serued as syres · that serueth the deuel.

Iob the Ientel · in his Ieestes seide,

*Quare via impiorum prosperatur, bene est omnibus qui prauae
et inique agunt?*

Ac he that holy writ hath · euer in his mouthe,

24

He that suche craftes can · to conseille is clepid;
Thei lede lordes with lesynges · and bilyeth treuthe.

Iob the gentel · in his gestes witnesseth,

That wikked men, thei welden · the welthe of this worlde, 24
And that thei ben lordes of eche a londe · that oute of lawe lib-
beth;

*Quare impij viuunt? bene est omnibus, qui preuaricantur et
inique agunt?*

The sauter seyth the same · bi suche that don ille,

*Ecce ipsi peccatores habundantes; in seculo optimuerunt diui-
cias.*

“Lo!” seith holy letterre · “whiche lordes beth this shrewes!”
Thilke that god moste gyueth · leste good thei deleth, 28
And moste vnkynde to the comune · that moste catel weldeth;

Que perfecisti, destruxerunt; iustus autem quid fecit?

Harlotes for her harlotrye · may haue of her godis,
And Iaperes and Iogeloures · and Iangelers of gestes.

Ac he that hath holy writte · ay in his mouth,

32

And can telle of Tobye · and of the twelue apostles,
Or prechen of the penaunce · that Pilat wrouzt
To Iesu the gentil · that Iewes to-drowe:—

Litel is he loued · that suche a lessoun scheweth,

36

Or daunted or drawe forth · I do it on god hym-self!

But tho that feynen hem folis · and with faityng libbeth,
Aȝein the lawe of owre lorde · and lyen on hem-selue,
Spitten and spewen · and speke foule wordes, 40

Drynken and dryuelen · and do men for to gape,

Lickne men and lye on hem · that leneth hem no ȝiftes,

Thei conne namore mynstralcy · ne musyke, men to glade,

Than Munde the mylnere · of *multa fecit deus!*

44

And con tellen of Tobie · and the twelſe apostles;
 And prechen of the penaunce · that Pilatus wrouhte
 To Iesu the Ientil · that Iewes to-drowe
 On cros vppon Caluarie · as clerkes vs telleth;— 28
 Luytel is he loued or leten bi · that such a lessun redeth,
 Or daunseled or drawen forth · this disours witen the sothe;

That can coueite and caste thus · aren cleped in-to counsail.
Qui sapiunt nugas · et crimina lege uocantur,
Qui recte sapiunt · lex iubet ire foras. 20

He is reuerenced and robed · that can robbe the peuple
 Thorw fallas and false questes · and thorw fykel speche.
 Iob the gentil and wys · in hus gestes wytnesseth
 What shal worthe of suche · whenne thei lyf leten; 24

Ducunt in bonis dies suos, & in fine descendunt ad infernum.
 The sauter seith the same · of alle suche ryche;
Ibunt in progenies patrum suorum, & usque in eternum non
uidebunt lumen:

Et alibi: Ecce ipsi peccatores, & cel.
 “Lo!” holy lettrure seith · “whiche lordes been these shrewes!” 26
 Tho that god most good gyueth · most greue ryght and
 treuthe:

Que perfecisti, destruxerunt; iustus autem quid fecit?
 And harlotes for hure harlotrie · aren holpen er nedy poure; 28
 And that is no ryght ne reson · for rather men sholde
 Help hem that hath nouht · than tho that han no neede.

Ac he that hath holy writ · aye in hus mouthe,
 And can telle of Treuthe · and of the twelue apostels, 32
 Other of the passion of Crist · other of purgatorie peynes,
 Lytel is he a-lowed there-fore · among lordes at festes.

C. 18. coueite MEKG; coueyty P. 25. *progenies* EIF; *progenie* P.
 26. thees P. 27. god IMFSKG; PE om. *iustus—fecit*; in S only.
 28. hure S; here IKG; P om. nudy P. 34. at IMFG; of P.

For 3if harlotrie ne holpe hem the bet · (haue god my soule!)
 More then musyk · or makyng of Crist, 32
 Wolde neuer kyng ne kniht · ne canoun of seynt Poules
 3euen hem to heore 3eres-3iue · the value of a grote!
 Bote munstralsye and murthe · a-mong men is nouthe;
 Lecherie and losengrie · and loseles tales, 36
 And geten gold with grete othes · beoth gamus nou a dayes.

But 3if thei carpen of Crist · (this clerkes and this lewede)
 Atte mete in heor murthe · whon munstrals beoth stille, 39
 Thenne telleth thei of the trinite · hou two slowen the thridde,
 And bringeth forth ballede resouns · tak Bernard to witnesse,
 And puyteth forth presumpciun · to preue the sothe.
 Thus thei drauelen on heore deys · the deite to knowe,
 And demeth god in-to the gorge · whon heore gottus follen. 44

Ne were here vyle harlotrye · haue god my treuthe,
 Shulde neuere kyng ne kniht · ne chanoun of seynt Poules
 3yue hem to her 3eres3iue · the 3ifte of a grote!
 Ac murthe and mynstralcy · amonges men is nouthe 48
 Leccherye, losengerye · and loseles tales;
 Glotonye and grete othes · this murthe thei louieth.

Ac if thei carpen of Cryst · this clerkis and this lewed,
 Atte mete in her murthes · whan mynstralles ben stille, 52
 Thanne telleth thei of the trinite · a tale other tweyne,
 And bringen forth a balled resoun · and taken Bernard to witnesse,
 And putten forth a presumpsioun · to preue the sothe.
 Thus thei dryuele at her deyse · the deite to knowe, 56
 And gnawen god with the gorge · whan her gutte is fulle.

Ac the careful may crye · and carpen atte 3ate,
 Bothe afyngred and a-thurst · and for chele quake;
 Is none to nymen hym nere · his noye to amende, 60
 But hoen on hym as an hounde · and hoten hym go thennes.
 Litel loueth he that lorde · that lent hym al that blisse,
 That thus parteth with the pore · a parcel whan hym nedeth.
 Ne were mercy in mene men · more than in riche, 64
 Mendinantz meteles · mizte go to bedde.

God is moche in the gorge · of thise grete maystres,
 Ac amonges mene men · his mercy and his werkis;
 And so seith the sauter · I haue yseye it ofte, 68

Ecce audiuimus eam in Effrata, inuenimus eam in campis silue.

But carful mon may crien · and clepen atte ȝate
 Bothe of hungur and of thurst · and for chele quake; 46
 Nis no mon him neih · his nuy to amende,
 Bote honesschen him as an hound · and hoten him go thennes!
 Luyte loueth he that lord · that leneth him that blisse, 49
 That thus parteth with the pore · a parcel whon him neodeth.
 Neore merci in mene men · more then in riche,
 With mony defauti meeles · mihte thei go to bedde. 52
 God is muche in the gorge · of theose grete maystres,
 Bote a-mong mene men · his merci and his werkes;
 And so seith the psauter · sech hit in '*Memento*,

Ecce audiuiamus eam in Effrata, inuenimus eam in campis silue.

Now is the manere atte mete · when mynstralles ben styлле,
 The lewede a-ȝens the lered · the holy lore to dispute, 36
 And tellen of the trinite · how two slowe the thridde,
 And brynge forth ballede resones · and taken Bernarde to
 witnesse,
 And putteth forth presompcions · to preouen the sothe.
 Thus thei dreuelen atte deyes · the deyte to knowe, 40
 And gnawen god with gorge · when here guttes fullen.

Ac the carful mai crie · and quaken atte ȝate,
 Bothe a-fyngred and a-furst · and for defaute spille,
 Ys non so hende to haue hym yn · bote hote hym go ther
 god is! 44

Thenne semeth hit to my syght · to suche as so biddeth,
 God is nat in that hom · ne hus help neither!
 Lytel loueth he that lorde · that lente hym al that blisse,
 That so parteth with the poure · a parcel, whenne hym nedeth. 48
 Ne were mercy in mene men · more than in ryght ryche,
 Meny time mendynans · myghte gon a-fyngred;
 And so seith the sauter · ich sauh hit in *Memento*,

Ecce audiuiamus eam (.i. caritatem) in Effrata; inuenimus eam in campis silue.

Clerkes and kete men · carpen of god ofte, 56
 And han him muche in heore mouth · bote mene men in herte.

Clerkes and other kynnes men · carpen of god faste,
 And haue hym moche in the mouthe · ac mene men in herte.

Freres and faitoures · han founde suche questiouns
 To plesse with proude men · sithen the pestilence tyme, 72
 And prechen at seint Poules · for pure enuye of clerkis,
 That folke is nouzte fermed in the feith · ne fre of her goodes,
 Ne sori for her synnes · so is pryde waxen 75
 In religioun and in alle the rewme · amonges riche and pore,
 That preyeres haue no power · the pestilence to lette.

And ȝette the wrecches of this worlde · is none ywar bi other,
 Ne for drede of the deth · withdrawe nouzt her pryde,
 Ne beth plentiuous to the pore · as pure charite wolde, 80
 But in gaynesse and in glotonye · for-glotten her goode hem-selue,
 And breken nouzte to the beggar · as the boke techeth,

Frangere esurienti panem tuum, &c.

And the more he wynneth and welt · welthes and ricchesse,
 And lordeth in londes · the lasse good he deleth. 84

Thobye telleth ȝow nouzt so · take hede, ȝe riche,
 How the boke bible · of hym bereth witnesse :

*Si tibi sit copia, habundanter tribue; si autem exiguum,
 illud impertiri stude libenter:—*

Who-so hath moche, spene manliche · so meneth Thobie,
 And who-so litel weldeth · reule him ther-after; 88

B. 70. hym WCROB; L om.
 line is from IKGSF; not in PEM.

62. deȝe IMFSEK; dȝe P.
Frangere—tuam E; not in P.
 83. lust MFSK; loust P.

C. 55, 60. pestelences P.

58. pryuyde P.
 63. ȝees P. ywar IK; whar P.
 73. laste P.
 80. This line is in I only.

56. This

60. thees P.

67.

Freres and faytors · han founden suche questions 58
To plesse with this proude men · seththe pestilence tyme;

Clerkus and knyghtes · carpen of god ofte, 52
And haueth hym muche in hure mouthe · ac mene men in
herte.

Freres and faitours · han founde vp suche questiones
To plesse with proute men · sitthe the pestilences,
And preching at seint Poules · in pure enuye of clerkes, 56
That folk is nouht ferm in the feith · ne free of here goodes,
Ne sory for here synnes; · so is pruyde en-hansed
In religion and al the reame · among ryche and poure,
That preyeres han no power · these pestilences to lette. 60
For god is def now a dayes · and deyneth nouht ous to huyre,
And good men for oure gultes · he al to-grynt to dethe;
And 3ut these wrecches of thys worlde · is non y-war by other,
Ne for drede of eny deth · with-draweth hem fro pruyde, 64
Ne parteth with the poure · as pure charyte wolde,
Bote in gaynesse and in glotenye · for-glotten here goodes,
And breketh nat here bred to the poure · as the book hoteth;

*Frangere esurienti panem tuum; et egenos vagosque induc in
domum tuam.*

Ac the more he hath, and wynneth · the world at hus wylle, 68
And lordeth in leedes · the lasse good he deleth.

Tobie tauhte nat so · taketh hede, 3e ryche,
How he tolde in a tyme · and tauhte hus sone dele:

*Si tibi sit copia, abundanter tribue: si autem exiguum,
illud impertiri libenter stude.*

And this is no more to mene · bote “ho so muche good weldeth, 72
Be large ther-of while hit last · to leedes that been needy.
Yf thow haue lytel, leue sone · loke by thy lyue
Get the loue ther-with · thauh thou fare the werse.”
Ac lust no lord ne lewed man · of suche lore nou to hure, 76
Bote lythen how they myghte lerne · lest good to spene.
And so lyuen lordes now · and leten hit a Dowel;
For is no wit worth now · bote hit of wynnynge sounne,
And capped with clergie · to conspire wronge. 80
For-thi, quath hue to Wit, ‘be war · holy writ to shewe
Amonges hem that hauen · hawes atte wille,
The whiche is a lykynge and a lust · and loue of the worlde.’

Thei de-foulen vre fey · at festes ther thei sitten. 60
 For nou is vche boye bold · brothel and other,
 To talken of the trinite · to beon holden a syre,
 And fyndeth forth fantasyes · vr feith to apeyre;
 And eke de-fameth the fader · that vs alle made, 64
 And craken aȝeyn the clergie · crabbede wordes.
 "Whi wolde god vr saueour · suffre such a worm
 In such a wrong wyse · the wommon to bi-gyle?

For we haue no lettre of owre lyf · how longe it shal dure.
 Suche lessounes lordes shulde · louie to here,
 And how he myȝte moste meyne · manliche fynde.

Nouȝt to fare as a fitheler or a frere · for to seke festes, 92
 Homelich at other mennes houses · and hatyen her owne.
 Elyng is the halle · vche daye in the wyke,
 There the lorde ne the lady · liketh nouȝte to sytte.
 Now hath vche riche a reule · to eten bi hym-selue 96
 In a pryue parloure · for pore mennes sake,
 Or in a chambre with a chymneye · and leue the chief halle,
 That was made for meles · men to eten inne;
 And al to spare to spille · that spende shal an other. 100

I haue yherde hiegh men · etyng atte table,
 Carpen as thei clerkes were · of Cryste and of his miȝtes,
 And leyden fautes vpon the fader · that fourmed vs alle,
 And carpen aȝeine clerkes · crabbed wordes ;— 104
 "Whi wolde owre saueoure suffre · suche a worme in his blisse,
 That bigyled the womman · and the man after,
 Thorw whiche wyles and wordes · thei wenten to helle,
 And al her sede for here synne · the same deth suffred? 108
 Here lyeth ȝowre lore" · thise lordes gynneth dispute,
 "Of that ȝe clerkes vs kenneth · of Cryst by the gospel;

Filius non portabit iniquitatem patris, &c.

Whi shulde we that now ben · for the werkes of Adam
 Roten and to-rende? · resoun wolde it neuere; 112

Vnusquisque portabit onus suum, &c."

Suche motyues thei moeue · this maistres in her glorie,
 And maken men in mysbileue · that muse moche on her wordes;
 Ymaginatyf her-afterward · shal answeere to ȝowre purpos.
 Augustyne to suche argueres · he telleth hem this teme, 116

Non plus sapere quam oportet.

Bothe hir hosebonde and heo · to helle thorw him wenten, 68
 And heore seed for that sunne · the same wo drien."

Suche motyues thei meuen · thei maistres in heor glorie,
 And maketh men misbileeue · that musen on heore wordes.
 But Austin the olde · for alle suche precheth, 72
 And for suche tale-tellers · such a teeme scheweth,
Non plus sapere quam oportet sapere.

[*Not in C-text.*]

A. 61. an (*for* and) V. 71. musen on T; leeuën in V. B. 93. houses
 WCROB; house L. 107. wenten CRB; went L.

This wilneth ȝe neuer to wite · whi that god wolde
 Soffre Sathan · his sed to bi-gyle;
 But leeueth on that lore · that lereth holichirche, 76
 And preye him of pardoun · and penaunce in thi lyue,
 And for his muchele merci · to amenden vs heere.
 For alle that wilneth to wite · the weyes of god almihti,
 I wolde his eȝe weore in his ers · and his heele astur; 80
 That euer eft wilneth to wite · whi that god wolde
 Soffre Sathan · his seed to bi-gyle,
 Or Iudas the Ieuȝ · Iesu bi-traye;
 Al was as he wolde · lord, i-heried be thou! 84
 And al worth as thou wolt · what so we tellen!

Wilneth neuere to wite · whi that god wolde
 Suffre Sathan · his sede to bigyle,
 Ac bileue lelly · in the lore of holicherche,
 And preye hym of pardoun · and penaunce in thi lyue, 120
 And for his moche mercye · to amende 3ow here.
 For alle that wilneth to wyte · the weyes of god almyty,
 I wolde his eye were in his ers · and his fynger after,
 That euere wilneth to wite · whi that god wolde 124
 Suffre Sathan · his sede to bigile,
 Or Iudas to the Iuwes · Iesu bytraye.
 Al was as thow wolde · lorde, yworschiped be thow,
 And al worth as thow wolte · what so we dispute! 128

And tho that vseth this hanelounes · to blende mennes wittes,
What is Dowel fro Dobet · now def mote he worthe,
(Sitthe he wilneth to wyte · whiche thei ben bothe),
But if he lyue in the lyf · that longeth to Dowel; 132
For I dar ben his bolde borgh · that Dobet wil he neuere,
Theigh Dobest drawe on hym · day after other.'

And whan that Witte was ywar · what dame Studye tolde,
He bicome so confus · he couth nouȝte lokene, 136
And as doumbe as deth · and drowe hym arrere ;
And for no carpyng I couth after · ne knelyng to the grounde,
I myȝte gete no greyne · of his grete wittis,
But al laughyng he louted · and loked vpon Studye, 140
In signe that I shulde · biseche hir of grace.

A. 79. to write μ UTH₁; two V; see
 beo V. **86.** my TH₁:

88. 85. word TUH,;
V has Sire. 93. mele

And nou cometh a conioun · and wolde cacchen of my wittes,
 What is Dowel from Dobet! · nou daffe mot he worthe,
 Sithen he wilneth to wite · whuche thei ben alle! 88

Bote he liue in the leste degre · that longeth to Dowel,
 I dar ben his borw · that Dobet nul he neuere,
 Thauȝ Dobest drawe on him · day aftur othur.'

And whon that Wit was i-war · hou his wyf tolde, 92
 He bi-com so confoundet · he couthe not mele,
 And as doumbe as a dore · drouȝ him asyde.

Bote for no craft that I couthe · ne knelyng to grounde,
 I mihte gete no greyn · of his grete wittes, 96
 But al lauzwhinge he loutede · and lokede vppon Studie,
 In signe that I schulde · bi-sechen hire of grace.

And whanne Wit was y-war · what Studie menede, 84
 Ich myghte gete no greyn · of Wittes grete wittes,

Bote al lauhwyng he loutede · and loked vp-on Studie,
 Semyng that ich sholde · by-sechen hure of grace.

TUH₁; medle V. 96. his TUH₁; hire V. B. 129. hanelounes L.
 137. as WCROB; a L. C. 84. y-war IK; whar P. 86. lotede P;
 see l. 88.

And whon I wuste of his wil · to his wyf con I knele,
 And seide, 'merci, madame, 3oure mon schal I worthe, 100
 To worchen 3oure wille · while my lyf dureth;
 Kenne me kuyndely · to knowen what is Dowel.'

'For thi mekenesse, mon,' quod heo · 'and for thi milde speche,
 I schal kenne the to my cosyn · that Clergye is i-hoten. 104
 He hath wedded a wyf · with-inne this wikes sixe,
 Is sib to the seuen ars · that Scripture is i-nempnet;
 Thei two, as ich hope · after my be-sechyng,
 Schul wisse the to Dowel · I dar vndertake.' 108
 Thenne was I as fayn · as foul on feir morwen,
 Gladdore then the gleo-mon is · of his grete 3iftes,

And whan I was war of his wille · to his wyf gan I loute,
 And seyde, 'mercy, madame · 3owre man shal I worthe,
 As longe as I lyue · bothe late and rathe, 144
 Forto worche 3owre wille · the while my lyf dureth,
 With that 3e kenne me kyndely · to knowe what is Dowel.'

'For thi mekenesse, man,' quod she · 'and for thi mylde speche,
 I shal kenne the to my cosyn · that Clergye is hoten. 148
 He hath wedded a wyf · with-inne this syx monethes,
 Is sybbe to the seuene artz · Scripture is hir name.
 Thei two, as I hope · after my techyng,
 Shullen wissen the to Dowel · I dar it vndertake.' 152

Thanne was I also fayne · as foule of faire morwe,
 And gladder than the gleman · that golde hath to 3ifte,
 And axed hir the heighe weye · where that clergy dwelte,
 'And telle me some token,' quod I · 'for tyme is that I wende.' 156

'Axe the heighe waye,' quod she · 'hennes to Suffre-
 Bothe-wel-and-wo · 3if that thou wolt lerne,
 And ryde forth by Ricchesse · ac rest thou nau3t therinne,
 For if thou coupest the ther-with · to Clergye comestow neuere.
 And also the likerouse launde · that Leccherye hatte, 161
 Leue hym on thi left halue · a large myle or more,
 Tyl thou come to a courte · Kepe-wel-thi-tonge-
 Fro-lesynges-and-lither-speche · and-likerouse-drynkes. 164
 Thanne shaltow se Sobrete · and Symplete-of-speche,

And askede hire the heize wey · wher Clergye dwelleth,
 'And tel me sum tokne to him · for tyme is that I wende.' 112
 'I schal teche the the heize wey,' quod heo · 'from hennes
 to Soffre-

Bothe-weole-and-wo · ȝif that thou wolt leorne,
 And ryd forth bi Richesse · reste the nouȝt ther-inne;
 For ȝif thou couple the to him · to Clergie comestou neuere. 116
 And eke the longe launde · that Lecherie hette,
 Leue him on thi lust half · a large myle or more,
 Forte thou come to a court · Kep-wel-thi-tonge-
 From-lesynges-and-lyȝeres-speche- · and-lykerous-drinke. 120
 Thenne schaltou seo Sobre · and Symple-of-speche,

When ich was war of hus wille · to that womman ich loutede, 88
 And seide, 'mercy, ma dame · ȝoure man shal ich worthe
 As longe as ich lyue · bothe late and rathe,
 And for to worche ȝoure wil · the while my lyf dureth,
 With that ȝe kenne me kyndeliche · to knowe what is Dowel.' 92
 'For thi meeknesse,' quath hue · 'and for thi mylde speche,
 Ich shal the kenne to Clergie · my cosyn, that knoweth
 Alle kynē konnynges · and comsynges of Dowel,
 Of Dobet and Dobest · for doctor he is yknowe, 96
 And of Scripture the skylful · and scryuaynes were trewe.
 For hue is sybbe to the seuen ars · and also my soster,
 And Cleregies wedded wif · as wys as hym-selue
 Of lore and of letterure · of lawe and of reson. 100
 So with that that Clergie can · and counsail of Scripture
 Thow shalt conne and knowe · kyndeliche Dowel.'

Thenne was ich al so fayn · as foul of fair morwenynge,
 Gladder than gleo-man · that gold hath to gyfte, 104
 And asked of hure the heye way · wher that Clergie dwelte—
 'And tel me som tokne,' quath ich · 'for tyme is that ich
 wende.'

'Aske the heye wey,' quath hue · 'hennes to Suffre-
 Bothe-wele-and-moche-wo · yf thow wolt lerne. 108
 And ryd forth by Richesse · and rest nouht ther-ynne;
 Yf thow coueite to be riche · to Clergie comst thow neuere.

104. kenne T^{UH},; teche V.
 trywe P. 102. kendeliche P.

C. 91. duyrep P. 97. skyful (sic) P.
 110. coueite M^{FEK}; coueity P.

That eche wyȝt beo in wil · his wit the to schewe.
 So schalt thou come to Clergye · that con many thinges ;
 Sei him this signe · that I sette him to scole, 124
 And that I grette wel his wyf · for I wrot hire a bulle,
 And sette hire to Sapience · and to hire psauter i-gloset.
 Lo! logyk I lered hire · and al the lawe after,
 And alle musons in musyk · I made hire to knowe. 128
 Plato the poyete · I put him furste to boke,
 Aristotle and other mo · to arguen I tauȝte ;
 Gramer for gurles · I gon furste to write,
 And beot hem with a baleys · but ȝif thei wolde lernen. 132

That eche wiȝte be in wille · his witte the to shewe,
 And thus shaltow come to Clergye · that can many thinges.

Saye hym this signe · I sette hym to scole, 168
 And that I grete wel his wyf · for I wrote hir many bokes,
 And sette hir to Sapience · and to the sauter glose.
 Logyke I lerned hir · and many other lawes,
 And alle the musouns in musike · I made hir to knowe. 172
 Plato the poete · I put hym fyrste to boke,
 Aristotle and other moo · to argue I tauȝte.
 Grammer for gerles · I garte first wryte,
 And bette hem with a baleis · but if thei wolde lerne. 176
 Of alkinnes craftes · I contreued toles,
 Of carpentrie, of kerueres · and compassed masouns,
 And lerned hem leuel and lyne · though I loke dymme.
 Ac Theologie hath tened me · ten score tymes, 180
 The more I muse there-inne · the mistier it semeth,
 And the depper I deuyne · the derker me it thinketh ;
 It is no science for sothe · forto sotyle inne ;
 A ful lethy thinge it were · ȝif that loue nere. 184
 Ac for it let best by Loue · I loue it the bettre ;
 For there that Loue is leder · ne lacked neuere grace.
 Loke thow loue lelly · ȝif the lyketh Dowel ;

A. 122. eche wyȝt UTH₁; eueri mon V. 124. signe TUH₁; tokene V.
 131. gurles H₁TU; children V; *see* Pass. x. 155. 134. kende TH₁; tauȝte V.
 137. muse TUH₁; studie V. mistlokere TU; derkore V. 138. derkore
 (*last note*); derkere T; mistiloker V. 141. lat T; V *om.* B. 169. grete

Of alle maner craftus · I con counterfeten heor tooles,
Of carpunters and keruers; · I kende furst masouns,
And lered hem liuel and lyne · thauȝ I loke dimme.

Bote Teologie hath teoned me · ten score tymes; 136
For the more I muse theron · the mistiloker hit semeth,
And the deppore I diuinede · the derkore me thouȝte.
Hit is no science forsothe · to sotilen ther-inne,
Neore the loue that lyhth therinne · a lewed thing hit weore. 140
Bote for hit lat best bi Loue · I leue hit the betere;
For that Loue is the lord · that lakkede neuer grace;
Leef wel ther-vppon · ȝif thou thenke Dowel;

Bothe wommen and wyn · wratthe, yre, and slewthe,
Yf thow hem vse other haunte · haue god my treuthe! 112
To Clergie shult thow neuere come · ne knowe what ys Dowel.
Ac yf thou happe, quath hue · 'that thow hitte on Clergie,
And hast vnderstondyng · what he wolde mene,
Sey to hym thy-self · ouer-see my bokes, 116
And seye ich grette wel hus wif · ich wrot hure a byble,
And sette hure to Sapience · and to the sauter glosed.

Logyk ich lerede hure · and al the lawe after,
Alle the musons in musyk · ich made hure to knowe. 120
Plato the poete · ich putte hym ferst to booke,
Aristotle and othere · to arguen ich tauhte.
Grammere for gurles · ich gart furst wryte,
And bet hem with a baleyse · bote yf thei wolde lerne. 124
Of alle kyne craftes · ich contreeuede here tooles,
Of carpentrie, of kerueres · and contreeuede the compass,
And cast out by squire · bothe lyne and leuell.
Thus thorw my lore beth men ylered · thauh ich loke dymme.

Ac Theologie hath teoned me · ten score tymes, 129
The more ich muse ther-on · the mystiloker hit semeth,
And the deppere ich deuyne · the derker me thynketh hit.
Hit is no science sothliche · bote a sothfast by-leyue; 132
Ac for hit lereth men to louye · ich by-leyue ther-on the bettere.
For Loue is a lykyng thyng · and loth for to greue;
Lerne for to louye · yf the lyke Dowel,

WCB; grette LRO. 172. muke (*for* musike) L. 174. Aristotile L.
C. 112. hem FS; hit PEIKG. 118. glosede P. 131. deerker P.
132. by-lyue P; *sic* l. 133. 135. dowel IMFSK; to dowel PE; cf. l. 142.

For Dobet and Dobest · beoth drawen of Loue scole. 144
 In other science hit seith · seo hit in Catoun,

*Qui simulat verbis, nec corde est fidus amicus,
 Tu quoque fac simile, sic ars deluditur arte.*

But Theologie techeth not so · hose taketh kepe,
 He kenneth us the contrarie · azeyn Catons wordes,
 And biddeth vs ben as bretheren · and blessen vr enemys, 148
 And louen hem that lyzen on vs · lellyche at heor neode,
 And do good azeyn vuel; · god him-self hoteth,

For Dobet and Dobest · ben of Loues kynne. 188

In other science it seyth · I seigh it in Catoun,

*Qui simulat verbis, nec corde est fidus amicus,
 Tu quoque fac simile, sic ars deluditur arte.*

Who-so gloseth as gylours don · go me to the same, 192
 And so shaltow false folke · and faythlees bigyle,
 This is Catounes kennyng · to clerkes that he lereth.

Ac Theologie techeth nouzt so · who-so taketh ȝeme,
 He kenneth vs the contrarye · azein Catones wordes; 196
 For he bit vs be as bretheren · and bidde for owre enemys,
 And louen hem that lyen on vs · and lene hem whan hem nedeth,
 And do good azeines yuel · god hym-self it hoteth,

*Dum tempus habemus, operemur bonum ad omnes, maxime
 autem ad domesticos fidei.*

Poule preched the peple · that parfitnesse loued, 200
 To do good for goddes loue · and gyuen men that asked,
 And nameliche to suche · that sueth owre bileue.
 And alle that lakketh vs or lyeth vs · owre lorde techeth vs to louye,
 And nouzt to greuen hem that greueth vs · god hym-self for-
 badde it, 204

Michi vindictam, et ego retribuam.

For-thi loke thow louye · as longe as thow durest,
 For is no science vnder sonne · so souereyne for the sōule.

Ac astronomye is an harde thyng · and yuel forto knowe,
 Geometrie and geomesye · is ginful of speche; 208
 Who-so thenketh werche with tho two · thryueth ful late.
 For sorcerye is the souereyne boke · that to the science longeth.
 ȝet ar there fybicches in forceres · of fele mennes makynge,
 Experimentz of alkenamyne · the poeple to deceyue, 212
 If thow thinke to Dowel · dele ther-with neuere.

And seide hit him-self · in ensauple for the beste,

Necesse est ut veniant scandala.

Bote astronomye is hard thing · and vuel to knowe, 152
 Gemetrie and gemensye · is gynful of speche,
 That worcheth with theose threo · thriueth he late,
 For sorcerye is the souereyn bok · that to that science longith,
 3et arn there febicchis of forellis · of mony mennes wittes, 156
 Experimentis ofalconomye · of Alberdes makynge;
 Nigromancye and perimancie · the pouke to rise maketh;
 3if thou thenche Dowel · dele with hem neuere.

For of Dobet and of Dobest · here doctor is dere Loue.' 136

A. 144. loue scole U; louis skile T; lore in scole V. 145. *fidus* TU;
fidelis V. *Tu—arte*; VTUH, *om.*, but given in D. 147. kennip T; techep
 V. 148. vs TUH,; V *om.* 155, 156. bok—forellis from T; also
 in UH,; V *om.* B. 189. seigh CWO; saye L. 190. *similat* L. *nec* COB;
vel LW. 212. alkenamye WC; alkamye L.

Alle theose sciences · siker, I my-seluen 160
 Haue i-founded hem furst · folk to deceyue.

I be-take the to Crist,' quod heo · 'I con teche the no betere.'

I seide, 'graunt merci, madame' · and mekeliche hire grette,
 And wente forth on my wei · withouten more lettynge, 164

And fond as heo fore-tolde · and forth gon I wende,

And ar I coome to Clergye · couthe I neuer stunte.

I grette the goode mon · as the gode wyf me tauzte,

And afterward his wyf · I worschupet hem bothe, 168

And tolde hire the tokenes · that me i-tauzt were.

Was neuer gome vppon grounde · seththen god made heuene,

Feiroke vndurfonge · ne frendloker maad at ese,

Then I my-self sothli · so sone as heo wuste 172

That I was of Wittes hous · and with his wif dam Studie.

Curteisliche Clergye · clupte me and custe,

And asked hou Wit ferde · and eke his wyf Studie.

And I seide sothlyche · 'thei sende me hider 176

To leorne at 3ou Dowel · and Dobet after,

And seththen afturward to seo · sumwhat of Dobest.'

'Hit is a wel feir lyf,' quod heo · 'among the lewed peple,

Actif it is i-hoten · hosebondes hit vsen; 180

[Here MS. V ends; the rest of the Passus is from T.]

Alle thise sciences I my-self · sotiled and ordeyned,

And founded hem formest · folke to deceyue.

Telle Clergye thise tokenes · and Scripture after, 216

To conseilte the kyndely · to knowe what is Dowel.'

I seide, 'graunt mercy, madame' · and mekeliche hir grette,

And went wigtlich away · with-oute more lettynge.

And til I come to Clergye · I couthe neuere stynte. 220

And grette the good man · as Studye me tauzte,

And afterwardes the wyf · and worshiped hem bothe,

And tolde hem the tokenes · that me tauzte were. 223

Was neuere gome vppon this grounde · sith god made the worlde,

Fairer vnder-fongen · ne frendeloker at ese,

Than my-self sothly · sone so he wist

That I was of Wittis hous · and with his wyf dame Studye.

I seyde to hem sothely · that sent was I thider, 228

Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest to lerne.

Trewe tilieris on erthe · taillours and souteris,
 And alle kyne crafty men · that cunne here foode wyne,
 With any trewe trauaille · toille for here foode,
 Diken or deluen · Do-wel it hatte. 184
 To breke beggeris bred · and bakken hem with clothis,
 Counforte the carful · that in castel ben fetterid,
 And seken out the seke · and sende hem that hem nedith;
 Obedient as bretheren · and sustren to othere; 188
 Thus bed the Do-bet · so berith witnesse the sauter;
Ecce quam bonum et quam iocundum, habitare, fratres, in unum.
 Sike with the sory · singe with the glade,
Gaudere cum gaudentibus, et flere cum flentibus,
 Dredles is Dobet · Dobest wot the sothe!
 Sire Dobest hath benefices · so is he best worthi, 192
 Be that god in the gospel · grauntith and techith;
Qui facit et docuerit, magnus vocabitur in regno celorum.
 Forthi is Dobest · a bisshopis pere,
 Prince ouer godis peple · to prechen or to chaste.
 Dobet doth ful wel · and dewid he is also, 196
 And hath possessions and pluralites · for pore menis sake.
 For mendynauntz at mischiefe · the men were dewid;
 And that is riztful religioun · none renneris aboute,
 Ne no leperis ouer lond · ladies to shryue. 200

Tho wente ich my way · with-oute more lettynge,
 And to Clergie ich kam · as clerkes me seide.
 And ich grette hym goodliche · and greithliche hym told,
 How that Wit and hus wif · wissed me to hym, 140
 To kenne and to knowe · kyndeliche Dowel.

A. 180. Actif it TUD; A lyf (*wrongly*) V. 191. *This line is from MS.*
 Harl. 3954, fol. 122; TH, UD *have only*, God wot, þis is dobet. 194. a UD;
 TH, *om.* B. 214. sciences WRB; science LO. 221. grette WCRO;
 gret L. C. 139. greiliche (*sic*) P. 141. kenne IMFS; kowe (*for*
 knowe) P.

[*Not in A-text.*]

‘ It is a comune lyf,’ quod Clergye · ‘ on holycherche to bileue,
 With alle the artikles of the feithe · that falleth to be knowe.
 And that is to bileue lelly · bothe lered and lewed, 232
 On the grete god · that gynnyng had neuere,
 And on the sothfaste sone · that saued mankynde
 Fro the dedly deth · and the deueles power,
 Thorwgh the helpe of the holy goste · the whiche goste is of bothe ;
 Three propre persones · ac nouzt in plurel noumbre, 237
 For al is but on god · and eche is god hym-selue ;

Deus pater, deus filius, deus spiritus sanctus ;

God the fader, god the sone · god holigoste of bothe,
 Maker of mankynde · and of bestes bothe. 240

Austyn the olde · here-of he made bokes,
 And hym-self ordeyned · to sadde vs in bileue.
 Who was his autour? · alle the foure euangelistes ; 243
 And Cryst clepid hym-self so · the ewangelistes bereth witnesse :—

*Ego in patre et pater in me est ; et, qui videt me, videt et
 patrem meum.*

Alle the clerkes vnder Cryst · ne couthe this assoille,
 But thus it bilongeth to bileue · to lewed that willen Dowel.
 For had neuere freke fyne wytte · the feyth to dispute,
 Ne man had no merite · myzte it ben yproued : 248

*Fides non habet meritum, vbi humana ratio prebet ex-
 perimentum.*

Thanne is Dobet to suffre · for thi soules helth,
 Al that the boke bit · by holycherche techyng ;
 And that is—“ man, bi thi mizte · for mercies sake,
 Loke thow worche it in werke · that thi worde sheweth ; 252
 Suche as thow semest in syzte · be in assay y-founde ;

Appare quod es, vel esto quod appares :

And lat no body be · bi thi beryng bygyled,
 But be suche in thi soule · as thow semest with-oute.”

Thanne is Dobest to be bolde · to blame the gylty, 256
 Sithenes thow seest thi-self · as in soule clene ;
 Ac blame thow neuere body · and thow be blame-worthy :

Si culpares velis · culpabilis esse cauebis,

Dogma tuum sordet · cum te tua culpa remordet. 260

God in the gospel · grymly repreueth

[*Not in A-text.*]

'By Cryst,' quath Clergie · 'yf thow coueyte Dowel,
 Kep the ten commaundemens · and kep the fro synne;
 And by-leyf leelly · how godes sone a-lyghte 144
 On the mayde Marie · for mankynnes sake,
 And by-cam man of that mayde · with-oute mannes kynde.
 And al that holy churche · here-of can the lere,
 By-leyf leelly there-on · and look thow do ther-after. 148

Her-of Austin the olde · made bokes and bokes;
 Ho was hus autor · and him of god tauhte?
 Patriarkes and prophetes · aposteles and anges
 And the holy trinite · to Austyn appeirede, 152
 And he ous seide as he seih · and so ich by-leyue,
 That he seih the syre and the sone · and seynte spirit togederes,
 And alle thre bote on God · and her-of made he bokes,
 3e, busiliche bokes; · ho beth hus wytnesses? 156

*Ego in patre et pater in me est; et qui me vidit, patrem
meum uidit qui in celis est.*

Alle the clerkes vnder Crist · ne couthe this asoile;
 Bote thus by-longeth to by-leyue · alle that lyketh dowel.
 For hadde neuere frek fyn wit · the faith to dispute,
 Ne man myghte haue no merit ther-of · myghte hit be preoued;

*Fides non habet meritum, ubi humana ratio prebet ex-
perimentum.*

Thus By-leyue and Leaute · and Loue is the thridde, 161
 That maketh men to Dowel · Dobet, and Dobest.'

B. 237. propre R; *wrongly om. in LWCOB.* C. 156. beþ IFKG; but
 (for buth) P. *me est* IM; P *om. est.* 160. preouede P. *prebet ex-*
perimentum EMFS; *possidet dominium* (?) P.

[Not in A-text.]

Alle that lakken any lyf · and lakkes han hem-selue :

Quid consideras festucam in oculo fratris tui, trabem in oculo tuo non vides ?

Why meuestow thi mode · for a mote in thi brotheres eye,
Sithen a beem in thine owne · ablyndeth thi-selue ? 264

Eice primo trabem de oculo tuo, etc.,

Whiche letteth the to loke · lasse other more.

I rede eche a blynde bosarde · do bote to hym-selue ;
For abbotes and for prioures · and for alle manere prelates,
As parsones and parisshe-prestes · that preche shulde and teche,
Alle manere men · to amenden by here myzte ; 265

This tixte was tolde 3ow · to ben war, ar 3e tauzte,
That 3e were suche as 3e seyde · to salue with othere.
For goddis worde wolde nouzt be loste · for that worcheth euere,
If it auailed nouzt the comune · it myzte auaille 3owseluen. 273

Ac it semeth now sothly · to the worldes syght,
That goddes worde worcheth nauzte · on lered ne on lewede,
But in suche a manere as Marke · meneth in the gospel, 276

Dum cecus ducit cecum, ambo in foueam cadunt.

Lewed men may likne 3ow thus · that the beem lithe in 3owre
eyghen,

And the festu is fallen · for 3owre defaute,
In alle manere men · thourgh mansed prestes.

The bible bereth witnesse · that alle the folke of Israel 280

Byttere abouzte the gultes · of two badde prestes,

Offyn and Fynes ; · for her coueytise,

Archa dei myshapped · and Ely brake his nekke.

For-thi, 3e corectoures, claweth her-on · and corecteth fyrst
3ow-seluen, 284

And thanne mowe 3e saufly seye · as Dauid made the sauter :

Existimasti inique quod ero tui similis : arguam te, et statuam contra faciem tuam.

And thanne shal borel clerkes ben abasched · to blame 3ow
or to greue,

And carpen nouzte as thei carpen now · and calle 3ow doumbe
houndes, 287

Canes non valentes latrare,

[*Not in A-text.*]

[*Not in C-text; but compare C. Pass. i. ll. 104-114 (p. 11), with
B. Pass. x. ll. 280-283.*]

Gregory the grete clerke · a good pope in his tyme,
 Of religioun the rewele · he reherside in his morals,
 And seide it in ensauple · that thei shulde do the betere :
 ' Whanne fisshes faile the flood · or the fresshe watir, 204
 Thei diȝe for the drouȝte · whanne thei dreȝe lengen ;

And drede to wratthe ȝow in any worde · ȝowre werkemanship
 to lette, 288

And be prestiore at ȝowre prayere · than for a pounce of nobles ;
 And al for ȝowre holynesse · haue ȝe this in herte.

Amonges riȝtful religiouse · this reule schulde be holde ;
 Gregorie the grete clerke · and the goed pope 292
 Of religioun the reule · reherset in his morales,
 And seyth it in ensauple · for thei schulde do there-after,
 ' Whenne fissches failen the flode · or the fresche water,
 Thei deȝen for drouthe · whanne thei drie ligge ; 296

Riȝt so, quod Gregorie · religioun roileth,
 Sterueth and stynketh · and steleth lordes almesses,
 That oute of couent and cloystre · coueyten to libbe.'
 For if heuene be on this erthe · and ese to any soule, 300
 It is in cloistere or in scole · be many skilles I fynde ;
 For in cloistre cometh no man · to chide ne to fize,
 But alle is buxumnesse there and bokes · to rede and to lerne.

In scole there is scorne · but if a clerke wil lerne, 304
 And grete loue and lykyng · for eche of hem loueth other.
 Ac now is Religioun a ryder · a rowmer bi stretes,
 A leder of louedayes · and a londe-bugger,
 A priker on a palfray · fro manere to manere, 308
 An heep of houndes at his ers · as he a lorde were.
 And but if his knaue knele · that shal his cuppe brynge,
 He loueth on hym and axeth hym · who tauȝte hym curteisye ?
 Litel had lordes to done · to ȝyue londe fram her heires 312
 To religious, that haue no reuthe · though it reyne on here auteres !

In many places ther hij persones ben · be hem-self at ese,
 Of the pore haue thei no pite · and that is her charite ;
 Ac thei leten hem as lordes · her londe lith so brode. 316

Ac there shal come a kyng · and confesse ȝow religiouses,
 And bete ȝow, as the bible telleth · for brekyng of ȝowre reule,

Riȝt so be religioun · it roileth and steruith,
 That out of couent and cloistre · coueiten to libben.'
 Ac now is Religioun a ridere · and a rennere aboute, 208
 A ledere of louedayes · and a lond-biggere,
 Poperith on a palfrey · to toune and to toune,

From
C. vi.
147-170
(p. 127).

[Gregorie the grete clerk · gart write in bokes 147
 The ruele of alle religious · ryghtful and obedient.
 Right as fisshes in flod · whenne hem faileth water,
 Deyen for drouthe · whenne thei drye liggen,
 Ryght so religion · roteth and sterueth,
 That out of couent and cloistre · coueyteth to dwelle. 152
 For yf heuene be on thys erthe · other eny eyse for saule,
 Hit is in cloistre other in scole · by meny skyles ich fynde.
 For in cloistre cometh no man · to chide ne to fighte;
 In scole ys loue and lownesse · and lykyng to lerne. 156
 Ac meny day, men telleth · bothe monkes and chanouns
 Han ride out of a-ray · here ruele vuel yholde,
 Lederes of louedaies · and landes purchased,
 And priked a-boute on palfrais · fro places to maners, 160
 An hepe of houndes at hus ers · as he a lord were;
 And but hus knaue knele · that shal hus coppe holde,
 He loketh al louryng · and 'lordein' hym calleth.
 Lytel hadde lordes a-do · to ȝeue londe fro here aires 164
 To religious, that han no reuthe · thanh hit reyne on here auters.
 In places ther thei persons beth · by hem-self at ese,
 Of the poure han thei no pyte · that is here pure charite.
 Ȝe leten ȝow alle as lordes · ȝoure londe lyth to brode. 168
 Ac ȝut shal come a kyng · and confesse ȝow alle,
 And bete ȝow, as the byble telleth · for brekyng of ȝoure reule,

A bidowe or a baselard · he berith be his side;
 Godis flessch and his fet · and hise fyue woundis 211
 Arn more in his mynde · than the memorie of his foundours.
 This is the lif of this lordis · that lyuen shulde with Do-bet,
 And wel-a-vey wers · and I shulde al telle.

And amende monyales · monkes and chanouns,
 And putten hem to her penaunce · *ad pristinum statum ire*, 320
 And barounes with erles beten hem · thorough *beatus-virres* techynge,
 That here barnes claymen · and blame 30w foule:

Hij in curribus et hij in equis; ipsi obligati sunt, etc.,

And thanne freres in here freitoure · shal fynden a keye
 Of Costantynes coffres · in which is the catel 324
 That Gregories god-children · han yuel dispended.
 And thanne shal the abbot of Abyndoun · and alle his issu
 for euere

Haue a knokke of a kynge · and incurable the wounde. 327

That this worth soth, seke 3e · that oft ouer-se the bible:

*Quomodo cessauit exactor, quieuit tributum; contriuit dominus
 baculum impiorum,*

et virgam dominancium cedencium plaga insanabili, etc.

Ac ar that kynge come · Cayme shal awake. 329

Ac Dowel shal dyngen hym adoune · and destruyen his myzte.

‘Thanne is Dowel and Dobet,’ quod I · ‘*dominus* and knizthode.

From
 B. xi.
 1-12.

[Thanne Scripture scorned me · and a skile tolde,
 And lakked me in Latyne · and li3te by me she sette,
 And seyde, ‘*multi multa sciunt, et seipsos nesciunt.*’
 Tho wepte I for wo · and wratth of her speche,
 And in a wynkyng wratth · wex I aslepe. 4
 A merueillouse meteles · mette me thanne,
 That I was rauished ri3t there · and Fortune me sette,
 And into the londe of Longynge · allone she me brou3te,
 And in a myroure that hi3t Mydlerd · she mad me to biholde. 8
 Sitthen she sayde to me · ‘here myztow se wondres,
 And knowe that thou coueytest · and come ther-to, par aunter.’
 Thenne hadde Fortune folwyng hir · two faire damoyseles,
Concupiscentia-carnis · men called the elder mayde, 12

I wende that kinghed and kniȝthed · and caiseris with erlis 216
Wern Do-wel and Do-bet · and Do-best of hem alle;
For I haue seiȝe it my-selfe · and siththen red it aftir,
How Crist counseillith the comune · and kenneth hem this tale,

Super cathedram Moisi sederunt principes.

For-thi I wende that tho wyȝes · wern Do-best of alle! 220

From
C. vi.
171-180
(pp. 127,
129).

And amende ȝow monkes · moniales, and chanons,
And putte ȝow to ȝoure penaunce · *ad pristinum statum ire.* 172
And barons and here barnes · blame ȝow and reprove;
Hii in curribus et hi in equis: ipsi obligati sunt, et
cecidierunt.

Freres in here freitour · shulle fynde that tyme
Bred with-oute beggyng · to lyue by euere after,
And Constantyn shal be here cook · and couerer of here church.
For the abbot of Engelonde · and the abbess hys nece 177
Shullen haue a knock on here crounes · and in-curable the wounde;

Contrivit dominus baculum impiorum, uirgam dominancium
plaga in-sanabili.

Ac er̃ that kyng come · as cronycles me tolde,
Clerkus and holychurche · shal be clothed newe.]

Thanne Scripture scorned me · and many skyles shewed,
And contynaunce made to Clergie · to congie me, hit semede,
And lakkede me in Latyn · and lyght by me sette, 165

And seide, '*multi multa sapiunt, et seipsos nesciunt.*'

Tho wepte ich for wo · and wrathede of here wordes,
And in a wynkyng ich worth · and wonderliche ich mette.
For ich was raueshed ryght ther; · Fortune me fette, 168
In-to the londe of longyng · and loue hue me brouhte,
And in a myrour, hihte Myddelerd · hue made me to loke,
And sutthe seide to me · 'her myghte thou see wondres, 171
And knowe that thow coueitest · and come ther-to, paraunter.'

Thenne hadde Fortune folwyng hure · two faire maidenys,
Concupiscentia-carnis · me calde the eldere mayde,

I nile not scorne,' quod Scripture · 'but scryueyns lize;
 Kinghod and knizthod · for auzt I can aspie, 222

From
 B. xi.
 13-35.

And Couetyse-of-eyes · ycalled was that other;
 Pryde-of-parfyte-lyuyng · pursued hem bothe,
 And badde me, for my contenance · acounte Clergye lize.
Concupiscentia-carnis · colled me aboute the nekke, 16
 And seyde, 'thou art 3onge and 3epe · and hast 3eres ynowe
 Forto lyue longe · and ladyes to louye.
 And in this myroure thou myzte se · myrthes ful manye,
 That leden the wil to lykyng · al thi lyf-tyme.' 20
 The secounde seide the same · 'I shal suwe thi wille;
 Til thou be a lorde and haue londe · leten the I nelle,
 That I ne shal folwe thi felawship · if Fortune it lyke.'
 'He shal fynde me his frende' · quod Fortune therafter; 24
 'The freke that folwed my wille · failled neuer blisse.'
 Thanne was there one that hyste Elde · that heuy was of chere;
 'Man,' quod he, 'if I mete with the · bi Marie of heuene,
 Thou shalt fynde Fortune the faille · at thi moste nede, 28
 And *Concupiscentia-carnis* · clene the forsake!
 Bitterliche shaltow banne thanne · bothe dayes and niztes
 Coneytise-of-eyghe · that euer thou hir knewe,
 And Pryde-of-parfyt-lyuyng · to moche peril the brynge.' 32
 '3ee, recche the neuere,' quod Recchelesnesse · stode forth in
 ragged clothes,
 'Folwe forth that Fortune wole · thou hast wel fer til elde;
 A man may stoupe tymes ynow · whan he shal tyne the croune!']

'I nel nouzt scorne,' quod Scripture · 'but-if scryueynes lye;
 Kynghod ne knyztthod · by nauzt I can awayte, 333
 Helpeth nouzt to heueneward · one heres ende,
 Ne ricchesse rize nouzt · ne reaute of lordes.

Helpith nouȝt to heuene · at one ȝeris ende,
Ne richesse ne rentis · ne realte of lordis. 224

And Couetyse-of-eyen · ycald was that othere.
And Pruyde-of-parfit-lyuyng · pursewede me faste, 176
And bad me for my contynence · counte Clergies lore lyght.
Concupiscentia-carnis · comfortyde me in thys wyse,
And seide, 'thow art ȝong and ȝep · and hast ȝeris ynowe
For to lyue longe · and ladyes to louye. 180
And in this mirour thow myȝt see · murthes ful menye,
That lede the wol to lykyng · al thy lyf-tyme.'
The secounde mayde seide · 'ich shal sewe thi wil;
Til thow be a lord of londe · leten the ich nelle, 184
That ich ne shal folwie thy felaushupe · yf Fortune lyke.'
'He shal fynde me hus frende' · quath Fortune her-after;
'That man that me lyketh helpe · myghte nat myshappe.'
Thenne was ther on hiht Elde · that heuy was of chere; 188
'Man,' quath Elde, 'mete ich with the · by Marie of heuene!
Thou shalt fynde Fortune · faile at thy moste neede,
And *Concupiscentia-carnis* · clene the for-sake!
Byterliche shalt thow banne thenne · bothe dayes and nyghtes
Couetyse-of-eyen · that euere thow hure knewe, 193
And Pruyde-of-parfit-lyuyng · to muche peril the bryng.'
'Ȝe, recche the neuere,' quath Rechelesness · stod forth in
raggede clothes,
'Folwe forth that Fortune wol · thou hast ful fer to elde; 196
A man may stoupe tyme ynowe · when he shal tyne the corone!
Syre Wanhope was sibbe to hym · as som men me tolde,
For Rechelesnesse in hus rybaudrie · ryht thus he seide,
'Go ich to helle, go ich to heuene · ich shal nouht go myn one!
Were hit al soth that Ȝe seyen · thou Scripture and Clergie,
Ich leyue neuere that lorde ne ladie · that lyueth her on erthe
Sholde sitte in godes sete · ne see god in hus blysse; 203
*Ita impossibile est diuili intrare in regnum celorum, sicut
camelus foramen acus.*

189. mette P. 192. dayes IM; a daye PK. 195. recche IK; reccheþ PE
(wrongly). 196. feer P. 199. rybaudrie P. 200. go (before myn)
IMFSGK; PE om. 202. eerthe P.

Poul prouith it is vnpossible · riche men in heuene,
 Ac pore men in pacience · and penaunce togidere
 Hauen eritage in heuene · ac riche men non.—

‘*Contra*,’ quod I, ‘be Crist! · that can I the wisse, 228
 And prouen it be the pistil · that Petir is nempnid ;

Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit, saluus erit.

‘That is *in extremis*,’ quod Scripture · ‘as Sarisines and Iewis
 Mowe be sauid so · and so is oure beleue ;

That an vncristene in that cas · may cristene an hethene, 232
 And for his lele beleue · whanne he his lif tyneth,
 Haue eritage in heuene · as an heiz Cristene.

Poule preueth it impossible · riche men to haue heuene, 336
 Salamon seith also · that syluer is worst to louye:

Nichil iniquius quam amare peccuniam.

And Caton kenneth vs to coueiten it · nauzt but as nede techeth,
Dilige denarium, set parce dilige formam.

And patriarkes and prophetes · and poetes bothe 340
 Wryten to wissen vs · to wilne no ricchesse,

And preyseden pouerte with pacience ; · the apostles bereth witnesse,
 That thei han heritage in heuene · and bi trewe rizte,
 There riche men no rizte may clayme · but of reuthe and grace.’

‘*Contra*,’ quod I, ‘bi Cryste · that can I repreue, 345
 And preue it bi Peter · and bi Poule bothe,

That is baptized beth sauf · be he riche or pore.’

‘That is *in extremis*,’ quod Scripture · ‘amonges Saracenes
 and Iewes ; 348

Thei mowen be saued so · and that is owre byleue,
 That an vncristene in that cas · may crysten an hethen,
 And for his lele byleue · whan he the lyf tyneth,
 Haue the heritage of heuene · as any man Crystene. 352

Ac Crysten men with-oute more · may nouzt come to heuene,
 For that Cryst for Cristen men deyde · and confermed the lawe,
 That who-so wolde and wylneth · with Cryste to aryse,

Si cum Christo surrexistis, etc.,

He shulde louye and leue · and the lawe fulfille. 356

That is—“loue thi lorde god · leuest aboue alle,
 And after, alle Crystene creatures · in comune, echie man other ;”
 And thus bilongeth to louye · that leueth to be saued.

And but we do thus in dede · ar the daye of dome, 360

Ac Cristene men, god wot · comith not so to heuene;
 For Cristene han a degre · and is the comune speche, 236

Dilige deum, etc., et proximum tuum sicut teipsum.

Godis word witnessith we shuln ȝiue · and dele oure enemys,
 And alle men that arn nedy · as pore men and suche,

*Dum tempus est, operemur bonum ad omnes, maxime autem
 ad domesticos fidei.*

Alle kynne creatures · that to Crist beleuith
 We be holde heizly · to herie and honoure, 240
 And ȝiuen hem of oure good · as good as oure seluen,
 And souereynliche to suche · that sewen oure beleue;

[*Not in C-text.*]

A. 232. That oon U; That arn TH₂; *read* That an.
 and T; D *om.* B. 336. to WOB; LRC *om.*

238. as H₂U;

That is, iche Cristene man · be kynde to other,
 And sithen hem to helpe · in hope hem to amende. 244
 To harme hem ne slen hem · god hiȝte vs neuere;
 For he seith it hym-selfe · in his ten hestis,
Non mecaberis, ne sle nouȝt · is the kynde Englissh,
 For, *Michi vindictam, et ego retribuam*;
 I shal punisshen in purcatory · or in the put of helle 248
 Eche man for his misdede · but mercy it make.'
 'Ȝet am I neuere the ner · for nouȝt I haue walkid
 To wyte what is Do-wel · witterly in herte;
 For how I werche in this world · wrong other ellis, 252

It shal bisitten vs ful soure · the siluer that we kepen,
 And owre bakkes that moth-eten be · and sen beggers go naked,
 Or delyte in wyn and wylde foule · and wote any in defaute.
 For euery Cristene creature · shulde be kynde til other, 364
 And sithen hethen to helpe · in hope of amendement.
 God hoteth bothe heigh and lowe · that no man hurte other,
 And seith, "slee nouȝt that semblable is · to myne owen liknesse,
 But if I sende the sum tokne"; · and seith, *non mecaberis*, 368
 Is, slee nouȝt, but suffre · and al for the beste.

For, *Michi vindictam, et ego retribuam*.

"For I shal punysshenn hem in purgatorie · or in the putte of helle,
 Vche man for his mysdedes · but mercy it lette."

'This is a longe lessoun,' quod I · 'and litel am I the wyser;
 Where Dowel is, or Dobet · derkelich ȝe shewen; 373
 Many tales ȝe tellen · that Theologie lerneth;
 And that I man made was · and my name yentred
 In the legende of lyf · longe er I were, 376
 Or elles vnwriten for somme wikkednesse · as holywrit wytnesseth,

Nemo ascendit ad celum, nisi qui de celo descendit.

I leue it wel,' quod I, 'bi owre lorde · and on no letterure bettere.
 For Salamon the sage · that Sapience tauȝte,
 God gaf hym grace of witte · and alle his godes after, 380
 To reule the reume · and riche to make;
 He demed wel and wysely · as holy writte telleth.
 Aristotle and he · who wissed men bettere?
 Maistres that of goddis mercy · techen men and prechen, 384
 Of here wordes thei wissen vs · for wisest as in here tyme,
 And al holicherche · holdeth hem bothe ydampned!

I was markid, withoute mercy · and myn name entrid
 In the legende of lif · longe er I were;
 Or ellis vndir-writen for wykkid · as witnessith the gospel,
Nemo ascendet ad celum nisi qui de celo descendit.
 And I leue on oure lord · and on no lettrure betere; 256
 For Salamon the sage · that Sapience made,
 God gaf hym grace · and richesse to-gidere
 For to reule his reaum · rízt at his wille;
 Dede he not wel and wisly · as holy chirche techith, 260
 Bothe in werke and in woord · in world in his tyme?
 Aristotle and he · who wrouzte betere?
 And al holy chirche · holden hem in helle!

For Clergie seith that he seih · in the seynt euangelie, 204
 That ich man maked was · and my name y-entred
 In the legende of lif · longe er ich were.
 Predestinat thei prechen · prechours that this shewen,
 Or prechen inparfit · ypult out of grace, 208
 Vnwryten for som wikkednesse · as holy writ sheweth,
Nemo ascendit in celum nisi qui de celo descendit.
 Ich leyue hit wel, by oure lorde · and no lettrure bettere.
 For Salomon the sage · that Sapience made,
 God gaf hym grace of wit · and of good after, 212
 Neuere to man so muche · that man can of telle,
 To rewele alle reames · and ryche to make,
 And deme wel and wislyche · wommen bereth witnesse;
Non michi nec tibi, sed diuidatur.
 Aristotle and he · hij tauhten men bothe; 216
 Maisters that techen men · of godes muchel mercy
 Witnessen that here wordes · and here werkes bothe
 Weren wonder goode · and wise in here tyme,
 And holychurche, as ich huyre · haldeth bothe in helle! 220

A. 247. *Non* UD; *ne* TH₂. *mecaberis* (so in all MSS.) 252. wrong
 UD; TH₁ om. 258. hym UD; hem TH₂. B. 361. It WCROB; I L
 (line marked.) 369. For—*retribuam* in R only; cf. Text A; and see l. 204.
 377. *descendit* L. 381. This line is in R only. O. 205. yentrede P.
 207. Prodestinat P. 218. Whitnesen P.

And was there neuere in this world · to wysere of werkis ;
 For alle cunnyng clerkis · siththe Crist ȝede on erthe 265
 Taken ensaumples of here sawis · in sarmonis that thei maken,
 And be here werkis and here wordis · wissen vs to Dowel ;

And if I shulde worke bi here werkes · to wynne me heuene,
 That for her werkes and witte · now wonyeth in pyne, 388
 Thanne wrouȝte I vnwysely · what-so euere ȝe preche.

Ac of fele witty in feith · litel ferly I haue,
 Though her goste be vngraciously · god for to plese.
 For many men on this molde · more sette here hertis 392
 In good than in god · for-thi hem grace failleth,
 At here moste myschief · whan thei shal lyf lete.
 As Salamon dede, and such other · that shewed gret wittes ;
 Ac her werkes, as holy wrytte seyth · was euere the contrarye.
 For-thi wyse witted men · and wel ylettred clerkes, 397
 As thei seyen hem-self · selden done ther-after,

Super cathedram Moysy, etc.,

Ac I wene it worth of many · as was in Noes tyme,
 Tho he shope that shippe · of shides and bordes ; 400
 Was neuere wriȝte saued that wrouȝt ther-on · ne other werkman
 elles,
 But briddes and bestes · and the blissed Noe,
 And his wyf with his sones · and also here wyues ;
 Of wriȝtes that it wrouȝte · was none of hem ysaued. 404
 God leue it fare nouȝt so bi folke · that the feith techen
 Of holicherche, that herberwe is · and goddes hous to saue,
 And shelden vs fram shame ther-inne · as Noes shippe did bestes ;
 And men that maden it · amydde the flode adreynten. 408
 The *culorum* of this clause · curatoures is to mene,
 That ben carpenteres holykirke to make · for Crystes owne bestes,
Homines et iumenta saluabis, domine, etc.

B. 398. *cathedra* LWCB.
 meste P. 236. Seilde P.
 Ac IMFKGS ; And PE.

406. herberwe WCOB ; heberwe L. C. 232.
 237. vntriwe P. *sederunt* ; in F only. 238.
 239. schip IMFSE ; shup P. 240. writ P ;

And ȝif I shal werke be here werkis · to wynne me heuene, 268
 And for here werkis and for here wyt · wende to pyne,
 Thanne wrouȝte I vnwisly · with alle the wyt that I lere!

Yf we sholden worchen after here workes · to wynnen ous heuene,
 That for hure werkes and witt · wonyeth now in peyne, 222
 Then wroȝhte we vnwisliche · for al ȝoure wyse techynge.
 Ac ich countresegge the nat, Clergie · ne thy connyng, Scripture;
 That ho so doth by ȝoure doctrine · doth wel, ich leyue. 225
 Ac me were leuere, by oure lorde · a lippe of godes grace
 Than al the kynde witt that ȝe can bothe · and connyng of
 ȝoure bokes.

For of fele witty, in faith · litel ferly ich haue, 228
 Thauh here gost be vngraciouse · god for to plese.
 For meny men of this molde · setten more here herte
 In worldliche good than in god · for-thy grace hem failleth.
 At here moste meschef · mercy were the beste; 232
 And mercy of mercy · needes mot aryse,
 As holy writ wittnesseth · godes word in the godspelle;

Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis, remecietur uobis.

Ryght wel ywittede men · and wel lettred clerkes,
 Selde am thei seien · so lyue as thei lere; 236
 Witnesse on godes wordes · that was neuere vntrewe:

Super cathedram Moysi sederunt, etc.

Ac ich wene hit worth of menye · as was in Noes tyme,
 Tho that he shop the schip · of shides and of bordes,
 Was neuere wright that ther-on wrouhte · ne workman y-saued,
 Bote briddes and bestes · and the blessed Noe, 241
 And hus wif with hus sones · and hus sones wyues;
 Of wrightes that hit wroughten · was non ysaue.
 God leyue hit fare not so by folke · that the faith techen 244
 Of holychurche, that sholde kepe · alle Cristine saules;
 For *archa Noe*, nymeth hede · ys no more to mene
 Bote holychurche, herbergh · to alle that ben blessed.
 The *culorum* of this clause · curatores ys to mene, 248
 That ben carpenters vnder Criste · holy kirke to make
 For lewede folke, godes foules · and hus free bestes;

Homines et iumenta saluabis, domine, etc.

see l. 243. 241. and the IMFSKG; þat the PE. 243. Of IMFSKG; And
 PE. 246. nemep P. 248. cause P. 249. kirke I; church P.

A Goode Friday, I fynde · a feloun was sauid
 That hadde lyued al his lyf · with lesinges and theftis; 272
 And for he kneuz on the crois · and to Crist shref hym,
 Sonnere hadde he saluacion · thanne seint Ion the baptist,
 Ar Adam or Ysaye · or any of the prophetis,
 That hadde leyn with Lucifer · manye longe ȝeris; 276
 A robbere hadde remission · rathere thanne thei alle,

At domes-day the diluuye worth · of deth and fyr at ones;
 For-thi I conseil ȝow clerkes · of holy cherche the wriȝtes, 412
 Wercheth ȝe werkes as ȝe seen i-write · lest ȝe worth nauȝt ther-inne.

On Gode Fridaye I fynde · a feloun was ysaued,
 That had lyued al his lyf · with lesynges and with thefte;
 And for he biknewe on the crosse · and to Cryste schrof hym,
 He was sonnere saued · than seynt Iohan the baptiste, 417
 And or Adam or Ysaye · or eny of the prophetes,
 That hadde yleine with Lucyfer · many longe ȝeres.
 A robbere was yraunceouned · rather than thei alle, 420
 With-uten any penaunce of purgatorie · to perpetuel blisse.

Thanne Marye Magdaleyne · what womman dede worse?
 Or who worse than Daud · that Vries deth conspired?
 Or Poule the apostle · that no pitee hadde, 424
 Moche crystene kynde · to kille to deth?
 And now ben thise as souereynes · wyth seyntes in heuene,
 Tho that wrouȝte wikkedlokest · in worlde tho thei were.
 And tho that wisely wordeden · and wryten many bokes 428
 Of witte and of wisdom · with dampned soules wonye.
 That Salamon seith, I trowe be soth · and certeyne of vs alle,

*Sunt iusti atque sapientes; et opera eorum in manu dei
 sunt, etc.;*

There aren witty and wel-libbynge · ac her werkes ben yhudde
 In the hondes of almiȝty god · and he wote the sothe 432
 Wher for loue a man worth allowed there · and his lele werkes,
 Or elles for his yuel wille · and enuye of herte,
 And be allowed as he lyued so; · for bi lyther, men knoweth
 the gode; 435

A. 283. none U; non DH₂; now T. 285, 286. *These two lines are corruptly given in all the MSS.* I correct them. B. 411, 413. *These lines are in R only.* Cf. C-Text. diluuye, from MS. Camb. Univ. Lib. Ff. 5. 35; deluye R (*wrongly*). fyr, from MS. Ff.; R has feer. 417. þe WCROB;

Withoute penaunce of purcatorie · to haue paradis for euere.

Thanne Marie the Maudeleyn · who miȝte do wers?

Or who dede wers thanne Daud · that Vrie destroyede? 280

Or Poule the apostil · that no pite ne hadde,

Cristene kynde · to kille to dethe?

And arn none for sothe · souereynes in heuene,

As thise that wrouȝte wykkidly · in world whanne thei were.

And ȝet I forget ferthere · of fyue wyttis techinge, 285

At domes day a dyluuye worth · of deth and fuyr at ones; 251

Worcheth, ȝe wryghtes of holichurche · as holy writ techeth,

Lest ȝe be loste as the laborers were · that labored vnder Noe.

A Goode Fryday, ich fynde · a felon was ysaued,

That vnlawefulliche hadde ylyued · al hus lyf-tyme; 255

And for he by-knew on the crois · and to Crist schrof hym,

He was sonnere ysaued · than seynt Iohan the Baptist,

And er Adam other Ysaie · other eny of the prophetes,

That hadden leye with Lucyfer · meny longe ȝeres.

A robber was y-raunsoned · rather than thei alle; 260

With-oute penaunce other passion · other eny other peyne

He passede forth pacientliche · to perpetuel blisse.

Al-so Marie Magdelene · ho myghte do worsse

As in lykyng of lecherye · no lyf denyede? 264

And Daud the douhty · that deuynede how Vrye

Mighte slilokeste be slayn · and sente hym to werre

Leelliche as by hus lok · with a lettere of gyle; 267

Paul the apostel, that no pite hadde · Cristene people to culle;

Now beeth these seintes, as men seyen · and souereynes in heuene,

Tho that worst wroghten · while thei weren here.

By that that Salamon seith · hit semeth that no wyght

Wot ho is worthi · for wele other for wicke, 272

Whether he is worthi to wele · other to wickede pyne:

Sunt iusti atque sapientes, et opera eorum in manu dei sunt.

Thus ich, Rechelesnesse, haue rad · registres and bokes,

And fond ich neuere, in faith · for to telle treuthe,

L om. 426. now WCOB; LR om. 430. *Sunt* R; *sine* LCOW.
 C. 251. of fuyr P; but IMSKG om. of. 254. ysauede P. 256. schrof
 EMIFS; schroue P. 261. With-outhe P. 264. denoyede P. 268.
 crustene P. 269. ȝees P. 275. of treuthe P; but MFSEK om. of.

That Clergie of Cristis mouth · comendit was euer;
 For he seide it hym-selfe · to summe of his disciplis,

Cum steteritis ante presides, nolite cogitare quid loquamini;
 And is as muche to mene · to men that ben lewid, 288
 "Whether 3e ben aposid of princes · or of prestis of the lawe,
 For to answeere hem · haue 3e no doute;
 For I shal graunte 3ow grace · of god that 3e seruen,
 The help of the holy gost · to answeere hem at wille." 292
 The douȝtiest doctour · or dyuynour of the trinite,

And wherby wote men whiche is whyte · if alle thinge blake were,
 And who were a gode man · but if there were some shrewe?
 For-thi lyue we forth with lither men · I leue fewe ben gode.
 For *quant OPORTET vyent en place · yl ny ad que PATI*,
 And he that may al amende · haue mercy on vs alle! 440
 For sothest worde that euere god seyde · was tho he seyde,
nemo bonus.

Clergye tho of Crystes mouth · commended was it litel,
 For he seyde to seynt Peter · and to suche as he loued,

Dum steteritis ante reges et presides, etc.;
 "Though 3e come bifor kynges · and clerkes of the lawe, 444
 Beth nouȝte abasched · for I shal be in 3oure mouthes,
 And 3yue 3ow witte at wille · and kunnyng to conclude
 Hem alle that aȝeines 3ow · of Crystenedome disputen."

Dauyd maketh mencion · he spake amonges kynges, 448
 And miȝte no kynge ouercome hym · as bi kunnyng of speche.
 But witte ne wisdome · wan neuere the maystrye,
 Whan man was at myschief · with-oute the more grace.

The doughtiest doctour · and deuynoure of the trinitee, 452
 Was Augustyn the olde · and heighest of the foure,
 Sayde thus in a sarmoun · I seigh it writen ones,

*Ecce ipsi idioti rapiunt celum, ubi nos sapientes in inferno
 mergimur :*

And is to mene to Englisshe men · more ne lasse,
 "Aren none rather yrauysshed · fro the riȝte byleue 456
 Than ar this cunnyng clerkes · that conne many bokes;
 Ne none sonner saued · ne sadder of bileue,
 Than plowmen and pastoures · and pore comune laboreres."

That Austyn the olde · and hizeste of the foure,
Seide this for a sarmoun · (so me god helpe !)

Ecce ipsi ydioti rapiunt celum, ubi nos sapientes in infernum mergemur;

And is to mene in oure mouth · more ne lesse, 296
“Arn none rathere yrauisschid · fro the rizte beleue
Thanne arn thise grete clerkis · that conne many bokis;
Ne none sonnere ysauid · ne saddere of consience,
Thanne pore peple as plouzmen · and pastours of bestis.” 300

That Clergie of Cristes mouth · comended was euere. 276
For Crist seide to seintes · and to suche as he louede,

Dum steteritis ante reges et presides, nolite cogitare quomodo aut quid loquamini, et cetera :

“Thauh 3e come by-fore kynges · and clerkes of the lawe,
Beeth nat a-ferd of that folke · for ich shal 3eue 3ow tonge,
Connynge and clergie · to conclude hem alle.” 280

Dauid maketh mencion · he spak among kynges,
And myghte no kynge hym ouer-come · as in connynge speche.
Sothly, seide Rechelesnesse · ‘ich see by menye euydences,
That nother wit ne wyghtnesse · wan neuere the maistrie 284
With-oute the grete gyfte of god · with hus grace and fortune.

For he that most seih and seide · of the sothfast trinite
Was Austyn the olde · that euere man wiste. 287
He saide thus in hus sarmon · for ensample of grete clerkes,

Ecce ipsi idioti rapiunt celum, ubi nos sapientes in inferno mergimur.

This is to mene no more · to men that ben lewede,
“Aren none rathere raueshed · fro the ryghte by-leyue
Cominliche than clerkes · most knowynge and connynge;
And none sonnere ysaued · ne saddere in the by-leyue 292
Than plouhmen and pastours · and poure comune peple;”

C. 277. *nolite*, &c. EFS; P *om.* 283. euedences P. 286. seith (*for* seih) PEFKG; say S; si M; see l. 154.

Souteris and seweris · suche lewde Iottis
 Percen with a *pater-noster* · the paleis of heuene,

Souteres and shepherdes · suche lewed Iottes 460
 Percen with a *pater-noster* · the paleys of heuene,
 And passen purgatorie penaunceles · at her hennes-partynge,
 In-to the blisse of paradys · for her pure byleue,
 That inparfitly here · knewe and eke lyued. 464

Ȝee men knowe clerkes · that han cursed the tyme,
 That euere thei couth or knewe more · than *credo in deum patrem* ;
 And pryncipaly her *pater-noster* · many a persone hath wissched.

I se ensamples my-self · and so may many an other, 468
 That seruauntes that seruen lordes · selden falle in arrerage,
 But tho that kepen the lordes catel · clerkes and reues.
 Riȝt so lewed men · and of litel knowynge,
 Selden falle thei so foule · and so fer in synne, 472
 As clerkes of holikirke · that kepen Crystes tresore,
 The which is mannes soule to saue · as god seith in the gospel :
*Ite vos in vineam meam.*¹

B. 460. shepherdes W; sheperdes L.

[¹ For the continuation of the B-text, see p. 330.]

Withoute penaunce, at here partynge · in-to heize blisse!
Breuis oracio penetrat celum.

And lewede leele laborers · and land-tylynge people
Persen with a *pater-noster* · paradys other heuene,
Passinge purgatorie penaunceles · for here parfit by-leyue; 296
Breuis oratio penetrat celum.

Selde falleth the seruant · so deepe in arerages
As doth the reyue other the conterroller · that rekene mot and
a-counte
Of al that thei hauen had · of hym that is here maister.
Ac these lewede laborers · of lytel vnderstondynge 300
Selde fallen so foule · and so deepe in synne
As clerkes of holy churche · that kepen sholde and saue
Lewede men in good by-leyue · and lene hem at here neede.¹

C. 297. arrirages P. 299. hadd P. 300. þees P.

[¹ For the continuation of the C-text, see p. 331.]

PASSUS XII.

[MS. Rowl. Poet. 137; fol. 40. Various Readings from U. = Univ. Coll. Oxf.,
and Ing. = Ingilby MS.]

Passus tercius de Dowel.

‘CRIST wot,’ quod Clergie · ‘knowe hit ȝif the lyke,
I haue do my deuer · the Dowel to teche;
And who-so coueyteth don betere · than the boke telleth,
He passeth the apostolis lyf · and put him to aungelys! 4
But I se now, as I seye · as me soth thinkyth,
The were lef to lerne · but loth for to stodie.
Thou woldest konne that I can · and carpen hit after,
Presumptuowsly, parauenture · a-pose so manye, 8
That hit myȝthe turne me to tene · and Theologie bothe.
ȝif I wiste witterly · thou woldest don ther-after,
Al that thou askest · a-soylen I wolde.’

Skornfully tho Scripture · set vp here browes, 12
And on Clergie criede · on Cristes holy name,
That he shewe me hit ne sholde · but ȝif I schriuen were
Of the kynde cardinal wit · and cristned in a font;—
And seyde hit so loude · that shame me thouȝte, 16
‘That hit were bothe skathe · and sklaundre to holy cherche,
Sitthe Theologie the trewe · to tellen hit defendeth;
Dauid godes derling · defendyth hit al-so:

Vidi preuaricantes et tabescebam:

[Not in B-text.]

A. 3. coueite to don U; couetyth bene Ing. 4. U om. the. peryth (for
put him) Ing. 5. thinkyth Ing.; thinkyt; Rowl. 6. leue for to Ing.
U omits this line. 9. it U; Rowl. Ing. omit. me Ing. U; Rowl. men
(wrongly). 12. tho Ing. U; þe Rowl. set vp here U; schet vp her Ing.;
sherte vp his (!) Rowl. 13. cryede U; cryd Ing.; crieþ Rowl. 14.
I schriuen Ing.; it stryf U; stryf Rowl. (corruptly). 15. U om. kynde.
Ing. om. wit. 16. For hit U has it; Ing. Rowl. om. hit. thouȝthe Rowl.
17. Ing. U om. bothe. Ing. inserts al before holy. 18. that trewe is U;
that true is Ing. (for the trewe). 19. preuaricantes Ing. U; preuaricationes
Rowl. (corruptly). (U ends with the word *tabescebam*, which the author evi-
dently construes as if it were *tacebam*.) 22. precheth Rowl.; preched Ing.

"I saw synful," he seyde · "ther-fore I seyde no-thing," 20
Til tho wrecches ben in wil · here synne to lete.

And Poul precheth hit often · prestes hit redyn,

Audiui archana uerba, que non licet homini loqui:

"I am not hardy," quod he · "that I herde with erys,
Telle hit with tounge · to synful wrecches." 24

And god graunted hit neuere · the gospel hit witnesseth,

In the passioun, whan Pilat · a-posed god al-myȝti,

And asked Iesu on hy · that herden hit an hundred,

"*Quid est ueritas?*" quod he · "verilyche tel vs;" 28

God gaf him non answeere · but gan his tounge holde.

Riȝt so I rede,' quod she · 'rede thou no ferther;

Of that he wolde wite · wis him no betere.

For he cam not by cause · to lerne to Dowel, 32

But as he seyth, such I am · when he with me carpeth.'

And when Scripture the skolde · hadde this skile y-sheued,
Clergie in-to a caban · crepte anon after,

And drow the dore after him · and bad me go Dowel, 36

Or wycke, ȝif I wolde · whether me lyked!

Than held I vp myn handes · to Scripture the wise,

To be hure man, ȝif I most · for euere-more after,

With that she wolde me wisse · wher the toun were, 40

That Kynde Wit the confessour · hure cosyn, was inne.

That lady than low · and laȝte me in here armes,

And sayde, 'my cosyn Kynde Wit · knowen is wel wide,

And his loggyng is with Lyf · that lord is of erthe. 44

And ȝif thou desyre · with him for to a-byde,

I shal the wisse wynlyche · where that he dwelleth.'

[Not in C-text.]

archana uerba Ing.; *archane* Rawl. (*corruptly*). 23. Ing. inserts of before that. 24. wrecches Rawl.; schrewys Ing. 25. Ing. om. 1st hit. 26. whan Rawl.; how Ing. 26. -myȝthi Rawl. 27. that Rawl.; ther Ing. 30. red Rawl.; rede Ing. (*twice*). 31. wolde Rawl.; ȝernyth to Ing. wis Rawl.; wysse Ing. 32. can nouth be cause Ing. 33. als ho Ing.; as he Rawl.; *read* as ho? Iangelyth Ing. (*for* carpeth). 34. thus wyt Rawl.; this scole Ing. (*read* this skile). 35. Ing. om. a. crepe Ing. 36. to Ing. (*for* after). 37. wykly Ing. qweithir that me Ing. 41. That Ing.; Rawl. om. the Ing.; hure Rawl. (*wrongly*). cosyn Rawl.; kynnysman Ing. 42. lowhe on me Ing. laȝthe Rawl.; lawht Ing. 43. wel Rawl.; ful Ing. 44. his loggyng is Rawl.; is lyggyng Ing. 45. a-byde Rawl.; dwelle Ing. 46. wynlyche Ing.; Rawl. om.

And thanne I kneled on my knes · and kyste her wel sone,
 And thanked hure a thousand sythes · with throbbant herte. 48
 She called [to ken] me · a clerioun that hyȝte
Omnia-probate · a pore thing with-alle,
 ‘Thou shalt wende with Wil,’ quod she · ‘whiles that him lykyth,
 Til ȝe come to the burghe · *quod-bonum-est-tenete*. 52
 Ken him to my cosenes hous · that Kinde Wit hyȝte,
 Sey I sente him this segge · and that he shewe hym Dowel.’
 Thus we lauȝte oure leue · lowtyng at onys,
 And wente forth on my way · with *omnia-probate*, 56
 And ere I cam to the court · *quod-bonum-est-tenete*,
 Many ferlys me by-fel · in a fewe ȝeris.
 The fyrste ferly I fond · a-fyngrid me made;
 As I ȝede thurgh ȝouthe · a-ȝen prime dayes, 60
 I stode stille in a stodie · and stared a-bowte;
 ‘Al hayl,’ quod on tho, and I answered ‘welcome · and with
 whom be ȝe?’
 ‘I am dwellyng with Deth · and Hunger I hatte,
 To Lyf in his lordshepe · longyth my weye, 64
 To kyllyn him ȝif I can · theigh Kynde Wit helpe;
 I shal felle that freke · in a fewe dayes!’
 ‘I wolde solwe the fayn,’ quod I · ‘but feyntise me henteth,
 Me folweth such a feyntise · I may no ferther walke.’ 68
 ‘Go we forth,’ quod the gome · ‘I haue a gret boyste
 At my bak, of broke bred · thi bely for to fylle;
 A bagge ful, of a beggere · I bouȝte hit at onys.’
 Than maunged I with him · vp to the fulle, 72

[Not in B-text.]

A. 47. wel Rawl.; fete Ing. 48. A thowsyng (*sic*) tymes I thankyd hire
 with throbbing hert Ing. 49. *I insert* to ken (*which both MSS. omit*) to
 complete the sense and metre. hyȝt Rawl.; hite Ing. 51. whiles that Rawl.;
 qwyl Ing. 52. bowhe (*for* borowhe) Ing. 53. hyȝth Rawl.; hite Ing. 55.
 lauȝpe Rawl. (*read* lauȝte); Ing. *om. this line*. 56. And Rawl.; I Ing. on
 Rawl.; in Ing. 57. And Rawl.; Ing. *om.* court Rawl.; cuntreyys Ing. 59.
 a-fyngrid Rawl.; an hunger-it Ing. 60. As I ȝede Rawl.; And I than Ing.
 ȝowthe Ing.; *miswritten* ȝou · be Rawl. 62. and I answered Rawl.; I seyde
 Ing. 63. hatte Rawl.; hite Ing. 64. in Rawl.; and Ing. longyth Ing.;
 longyt Rawl. 65. *From* Ing.; Rawl. *omits*. *For* theigh, Ing. *has* thei
 (*badly*). 67. quod I Ing.; Rawl. *om.* sentesye Rawl.; fayntys Ing.; *read*
 feyntise, as in A. v. 5, B. v. 5. hentith Ing.; hendeȝ Rawl.; *read* henteth.
 68. sentyse Rawl.; fayntyse Ing.; *see above*. no ferther Rawl.; not forth Ing.

For myssyng of mete · no mesour I coude,
 But ete as Hunger me hete · til my belly swellyd.
 Ther bad me Hunger 'haue gode day!' · but I helde me stille;
 For gronyng of my guttys · I durst gon no ferther. 76
 With that cam a knaue · with a confessoures face,
 Lene and rewlyche · with leggys ful smale.
 He halsed me, and I · asked him after,
 Of whennes that he were · and wheder that he wolde. 80
 'With Deth I duelle,' quod he · 'dayes and nyztes;
 Mi name is Feuere; on the ferthe day · I am a-first euere;
 I am messenger of Deth · men haue I tweyne,
 That on is called Cotidian · a courour of oure hous, 84
 Tercian that other · trewe drinkeres bothe!
 We han letteres of Lyf · he shal his lyf tyne;
 Fro Deth, that is oure duk · swyche dedis we brynge.'
 'Myzte I so,' quod I, 'god wot · 3oure gates wolde I holden.' 88
 'Nay, Will!' quod that wyzt · 'wend thou no ferther,
 But lyue as this lyf · is ordeyned for the;
 Thou tomblest with a trepget · 3if thou my tras folwe;
 And mannes merthe wrouzte no mor · than he deseruyth here, 92
 Whil his lyf and his lykham · lesten to-gedere.
 And ther-fore do after Do-wel · whil thi dayes duren,
 That thi play be plenteuous · in paradys with aungelys!
 Thou shalt be lauzt into lyzt · with loking of an eye, 96
 So that thou werke the word · that holy wryt techeth,
 And be prest to preyeres · and profitable werkes!'
 Wille [wiste] thurgh in-wit · (thou wost wel the sothe!)

[Not in C-text.]

69. gome Ing.; gom Rawl. 70. Of battys and broken bred Ing. Ing.
 om. for. 71. bou3pe Rawl.; bowht Ing. 72. with him Ing.; wit Rawl.
 to Ing.; at Rawl. 73. Rawl. *inserts the after* For. 74-76. *These three*
lines are in Ing. only. 78. *This line is in Ing. only.* 79. I haylsyd hym
 hendely · and axid him after Ing. 80. when Rawl; qwennys Ing.; *read*
 whennes. 82. a-threst Rawl.; athirst Ing.; *read* afirst. 83. masager
 Rawl.; mensenger Ing.; *read* messenger. 86. tyne Ing.; tyme (*wrongly*)
 Rawl. 88. so Rawl.; *miswritten* se Ing. quod he (*obvious error for quod I*)
 Ing.; Rawl. om. MS. Ing. *ends with l. 88.* 88. My3th Rawl.; *read* Myzte.
 89. wy3th Rawl.; *read* wyzt. 92. wrou3th Rawl. 96. lauzth, ly3th Rawl.;
read lauzt, lyzt. 98-100. Unless the lines be spurious, these are the author's
 own words; he kills himself off, by way of finishing his poem, but he lived to
 rewrite it, nevertheless. 99. wiste is *supplied*; Rawl. om.

That this speche was spedelich · and sped him wel faste, 100
 And wrouzte that here is wryten · and other werkes bothe
 Of Peres the Plowman · and mechel puple al-so;
 And whan this werk was wrouzt · ere Wille myzte a-spie,

[Continued from p. 324.]

PASSUS XI.

Passus xj^m.

THANNE Scripture scorned me and a skile tolde,
 And lakked me in Latyne · and lizte by me she sette,
 And seyde, '*multi multa sciunt, et seipsos nesciunt.*'
 Tho wepte I for wo · and wratth of her speche,
 And in a wynkyng wratth · wex I aslepe. 4
 A merueillouse meteles · mette me thanne,
 That I was rauissed rȳt there · and Fortune me fette,
 And in-to the londe of Longynge · allone she me brouzte,
 And in a myroure that hȳt Mydlerd · she mad me to biholde.
 Sitthen she sayde to me · 'here myztow se wondres, 9
 And knowe that thow coueytest · and come ther-to, par aunter.'
 Thanne hadde Fortune folwyng hir · two faire damoyseles,
Concupiscencia-carnis · men called the elder mayde, 12
 And Coueytise-of-eyes · ycalled was that other;
 Pryde-of-parfȳte-lyuynge · pursued hem bothe,
 And badde me, for my contenaunce · acounte Clergye lizte.
Concupiscencia-carnis · colled me aboute the nekke, 16
 And seyde, 'thow art ȝonge and ȝepe · and hast ȝeres ynowe,
 Forto lyue longe · and ladyes to louye;
 And in this myroure thow myzte se · myrthes ful manye,
 That leden the wil to lykyng · al thi lyf-tyme.' 20
 The secounde seide the same · 'I shal suwe thi wille;
 Til thow be a lorde and haue londe · leten the I nelle,
 That I ne shal folwe thi felawship · if Fortune it lyke.'
 'He shal fynde me his frende' · quod Fortune ther-after; 24
 'The freke that folwed my wille · failed neuere blisse.'

A. 101. wrouzthe Rawl.; read wrouzte. This line means that, besides the Vita de Dowel, Dobet, et Dobest, the author wrote Piers the Plowman. After

Deth delt him a dent · and drof him to the erthe, 104
And is closed vnder clom · Crist haue his soule!

Explicit Dowel.

[Continued from p. 325.]

Thanne Scripture scorned me · and many skyles shewede,
And contynauce made to Clergie · to congie me, hit semede,
And lakkede me in Latyn · and lyght by me sette, 165
And seide, '*multi multa sapiunt, et seipsos nesciunt.*'
Tho wepte ich for wo · and wrathede of here wordes,
And in a wynkyng ich worth · and wonderliche ich mette.
For ich was raushed ryght ther; · Fortune me fette, 168
In-to the londe of Longynge · and Loue hue me brouhte,
And in a myrour, hihte Myddelerd · hue made me to loke,
And sutthe seide to me · 'her myghte thou see wondres, 171
And knowe that thow coueitest · and come ther-to, paraunter.'
Thenne hadde Fortune folwyng hure · two faire maidenen,
From C. xii. *Concupiscentia-carnis* · me calde the eldere mayde,
163-187 And Couetyse-of-eyen · ycald was that othere.
(p. 311). And Pruyde-of-parfit-lyuyng · pursewede me faste, 176
And bad me for my contynence · counte Clergies lore lyght.
Concupiscentia-carnis · comfortyde me in thys wyse,
And seide, 'thow art 3ong and 3ep · and hast 3eris ynowe
For to lyue longe · and ladyes to louye. 180
And in this mirour thow my3t see · murthes ful menye,
That lede the wol to lykyng · al thy lyf-tyme.'
The secounde mayde seide · 'ich shal sewe thi wil;
Til thow be a lord of londe · leten the ich nelle, 184
That ich ne shal folwie thy felaushupe · yf Fortune lyke.'
'He shal synde me hus frende' · quath Fortune her-after;
'That man that me lyketh helpe · myghte nat myshappe.'

line 105, twelve more lines are added by a certain Johan But, who mentions king Richard as being still alive.

Thanne was there one that hiȝte Elde · that heuy was of chere,
 ‘Man,’ quod he, ‘if I mete with the · bi Marie of heuene,
 Thow shalt fynde Fortune the faille · at thi moste nede, 28
 And *Concupiscencia-carnis* · clene the forsake.

Bitterliche shaltow banne thanne · bothe dayes and niztes
 Couetyse-of-eyghe · that euere thow hir knewe,
 And Pryde-of-parfyt-lyuyng · to moche peril the brynge.’ 32

‘Ȝee, recche the neuere,’ quod Recchelesnes · stode forth in
 ragged clothes,

‘Folwe forth that Fortune wole · thow hast wel fer til elde;
 A man may stoupe tymes ynow · whan he shal tyne the croune.

“*Homo proponit*,” quod a poete · and Plato he hyght, 36
 “And *deus disponit*,” quod he · “lat god done his wille.”

If Trewthe wil witnesse it be wel do · Fortune to folwe,
Concupiscencia-carnis · ne Coueityse-of-eyes

Ne shal nouȝt greue the gretly · ne bigyle the, but thow wolt.’

‘Ȝee, farewel, Phippe!’ quod Fauntele · and forth gan me
 drawe, 41

Til *Concupiscencia-carnis* · acorded alle my werkes.

‘Allas, eye!’ quod Elde · and Holynesse bothe,
 ‘That witte shal torne to wrecchednesse · for wille to haue his
 lykyng!’ 44

Coueityse-of-eyghes · confortd me anon after,
 And folwed me fourty wynter · and a fyfte more,
 That of Dowel ne Dobet · no deyntee me ne thouȝte;
 I had no lykyng, leue me if the leste · of hem auȝte to knowe.

Coueityse-of-eyes · cam ofter in mynde 49
 Than Dowel or Dobet · amonge my dedes alle.

Coueityse-of-eyes · confortd me ofte,
 And seyde, ‘haue no conscience · how thow come to gode;
 Go confesse the to sum frere · and shewe hym thi synnes. 53
 For whiles Fortune is thi frende · freres wil the louye,

From
C. xii.
188-197
(p. 313).

Thenne was ther on hiht Elde · that heuy was of chere; 188
 ‘Man,’ quath Elde, ‘mete ich with the · by Marie of heuene!
 Thou shalt fynde Fortune · faile at thy moste neede,
 And *Concupiscentia-carnis* · clene the for-sake!
 Byterliche shalt thou banne thenne · bothe dayes and nyghtes
 Couetyse-of-eyen · that euere thou hure knewe, 193
 And Pruyde-of-parfit-lyuyng · to muche peril the brynge.’
 ‘Ȝe, recche the neuere,’ quath Rechelesness · stod forth in raggede
 clothes,
 ‘Folwe forth that Fortune wol · thou hast ful fer to elde; 196
 A man may stoupe tyme ynowe · when he shal tyne the corone!’

“*Homo proponit*,” quath a poete tho · and Plato he hihte, 304
 “*Et deus disponit*,” quath he · “let god do hus wille.”
 Al that Treuthe a-tacheth · and testifieth for goode,
 Thauh thei folwe that Fortune wole · no folie ich hit holde.
 And *Concupiscentia-carnis* · shal the nat greue 308
 Gretlich, ne by-gyly the · bote yf thy-self wolle.’
 ‘Ȝe, farewell, Fyppe!’ quath Fauntelet · and forth gan me drawe.
 Til *Concupiscentia-carnis* · a-corded to alle my werkes.
 Of Dowel ne of Dobet · no deynte me thouhte, 312
 Clergie and hus consail · ich countede ful lytel!

Hic explicit passus secundus de Dowel.

PASSUS XIII.

Incipit passus tercius de Dowel.

‘**A**LAS, eye!’ quath Elde · and Holynesse bothe,
 ‘That wit shal turne to wrecchednesse · for welthe hath
 al hus wil!’
 Couetise-of-eyen · confortede me after,

And seide, ‘Rechelesnesse · recche the neuere! 4
 By so thou riche were · haue thou no conscience
 How that thou come to good; · confesse the to som frere,
 He shal a-soile the thus sone · how so thou euere wyne hit.
 For while Fortune is thy frend · freres wollen the louye, 8

And fecche the to her fraternite · and for the biseke
 To her priour prouyncial · a pardoun forto haue, 56
 And preyen for the, pol bi pol · 3if thow be *pecuniosus*.'

Set pena pecuniaria non sufficit pro spiritualibus delictis.

By wissynge of this wenche I wrou3te · here wordes were so
 swete,

Tyl I for3at 3outhe · and 3arn in-to elde.
 And thanne was Fortune my foo · for al hir faire biheste, 60
 And Pouerte pursued me · and put me lowe,
 And tho fonde I the frere aferde · and flyttynge bothe,
 Azeines owre firste forward · for I seyde I nolde
 Be buried at her hous · but at my parisshe cherche. 64
 For I herde onys · how Conscience it tolde,
 That there a man were crystened · by kynde he shulde be buried,
 Or where he were parisshe · rízt there he shulde be grauen.
 And for I seyde thus to freres · a fool thei me helden, 68
 And loued me the lasse · for my lele speche.

Ac 3et I cryed on my confessoure · that helde hym-self so
 kunnyng,

'By my feith, frere,' quod I · '3e faren lyke thise woweres,
 That wedde none wydwes · but forto welde here godis; 72
 Rízte so, by the rode · rou3te 3e neuere
 Where my body were buried · bi so 3e hadde my siluer.
 Ich haue moche merueille of 3ow · and so hath many an other,
 Why 3owre couent coueyteth · to confesse and to burye, 76
 Rather than to baptise barnes · that ben catekumelynges.
 Baptizyng and burying · bothe ben ful nedeful,
 Ac moche more merytorie · me thynketh it is to baptize.
 For a baptized man may · as maistres telleth, 80
 Thorugh contricioun come · to the heigh heuene;

Sola contritio delet peccatum.

Ac a barne with-oute bapteme · may nou3t so be saued;

Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua, &c.;

Loke, 3e lettred men · whether I lye or do nou3te.'
 And lewte loked on me · and I loued after. 84
 'Wherefore lourestow?' quod Lewte · and loked on me harde,
 '3if I durste,' quod I, 'amonges men · this meteles auowe!'

B. 57. *pecuniosus* L. *pecuniaria* L. 79. *bynke* L; *bynkeþ* WOR
 81. *delet peccatum* COB; &c. L. 82. *ex aqua*, &c. COB: L om.

And fastne the in here fraternite · and for the by-seche
 To here priour prouincial · hus pardon to haue,
 And praye for the, pol by pol · yf thow be pecunious;

Pena pecuniaria non sufficit, et cet.'

By wissynge of this wenche ich dude · hure wordes were so
 swete, 12

Til ich for-3at 3outhen · and 3orn in-to elde.

Thenne was Fortune my foo · for al here fayre by-hesten,
 And Pouerte pursuwede me · and putte me to be lowe,
 And flittyng fond ich the frere · that me confessede, 16

And seide, 'he myghte me nat a-soile · bote ich suluer hadde
 To restitue resonabliche · for al vnryghtful wynnynge.'

'Owh! how!' quath ich tho · and myn hefd waggede,
 'By my faith, frere,' quath ich · '3e fare lik the wouwere 20
 That wilneth the wydewe · bote for to wedde here goodes.
 Ryght so, by the rode,' quath ich · 'rouhte the neuere
 Wher my body yburied were · by so 3e hadde my goodes!'

Thanne lowh Leaute · for ich lourede on the frere; 24
 'Whi lourest thow?' quath Leaute · 'leue syre,' ich seide,
 'For this frere flaterede me · while he fond me riche;
 Now ich am poure and penyles · at litel prys he set me:
 Ich wolde hit were no synne,' ich seide · 'to seye that were
 treuthe. 28

C. 11. pecunious EMFSK; pecunius P. 13. 3orn TK; 3orne P. 25.
 leue EMSK; lue P. 26. thees (for this) P.

'3e, bi Peter and bi Poule,' quod he · 'and take hem bothe to
witnessse,

*Non oderis fratres secrete in corde tuo, set publice argue
illos.'*

'Thei wol alleggen also,' quod I · 'and by the gospel preuen,
Nolite iudicare quemquam.'

'And wher-of serueth lawe,' quod Lewte · 'if no lyf vnder-
toke it, 89

Falsenesse ne faytrye? · for sumwhat the apostle seyde,

Non oderis fratrem.

And in the sauter also · seithe Daud the prophete,

Existimasti inique quod ero tui similis, &c.

It is *licitum* for lewed men · to segge the sothe, 92

If hem lyketh and leste · eche a lawe it graunteth,

Excepte persones and prestes · and prelates of holy cherche,

It falleth nouȝte for that folke · no tales to telle,

Though the tale were trewe · and it touched synne. 96

Thinge that al the worlde wote · wherfore shuldestow spare

To reden it in retoryke · to arate dedly synne?

Ac be neuere more the fyrste · the defaute to blame;

Thouȝe thou se yuel, sey it nouȝte fyrste · be sorye it nere
amended. 100

No thinge that is pryue · publice thou it neuere,

Neyther for loue laude it nouȝt · ne lakke it for enuye;

Parum lauda, vitupera parcius.'

'He seith sothe,' quod Scripture tho · and skipte an heigh,
and preched;

Ac the matere that she meued · if lewed men it knewe, 104

The lasse, as I leue · louyen it thei wolde.

This was her teme and her tyxte · I toke ful gode hede;

'*Multi* to a maungerye · and to the mete were sompned,

And whan the peple was plenere comen · the porter vnpynned
the ȝate, 108

And plukked in *pauci* priueliche · and lete the remenaunt go
rowme!'

Al for tene of her tyxte · trembled myn herte,

And in a were gan I waxe · and with my-self to dispute,

The sauter seith hit is no synne · for suche men as ben trewe
For to seggen as thei seen · and saue onliche prestes ;

*Existimasti inique quod ero tui similis ; arguam te, & statuam
contra faciem tuam.*

Thei wollen a-leggen al-so · and by the godspel preouen hit,
Nolite iudicare quemquam.'

‘Wher-of serueth lawe,’ quath Leaute · ‘and no lyf vndertoke
Falsnesse ne faiterie? · for som-what the apostel seide, 33

Non oderis fratrem tuum secrete in corde tuo.

Thyng that al the worlde wot · where-fore sholdest thou spare
To rehercen hit by retoryk · to a-rate dedliche synne?

Ac be thou neuer the furste · the defaute to blame ; 36

Thauh thou see, sey nat · som tyme, that is treuthe.

Thyng that wolde be pryue · publisse thou hit neuere,
Nother for loue labbe hit out · ne lacke hit for non enuye ;

Parum lauda, uitupera parcius.'

‘He seith soth,’ quath Scripture tho · and skypte an hy,
and prechede, 40

Ac the matere that hue meeuede · yf lewede men hit knewe,
The lasse, as ich leyue · louye thei wolde

The by-leyue of oure lorde · that lettrede men techen.

Of here teme and of here tales · ich took ful good hede ; 44

Hue seide in here sarmon · selcouthe wordes:—

‘*Multi* to a mangerie · and to the mete were sompned,

And whan the peple was plener come · the porter vnpynned
the gate,

And plyghte in *pauci* pryueliche · and leet the remenant go rome.’

Al for teene of here tixt · tremblede myn herte, 49

And in a weer gan ich wexe · and with my-selue to dispute

C. 33. *tuo* FST ; P *om.*
wrongly P ; cf. ll. 49, 72.

40. *tho* ITSK ; P *om.*
45. He (*for* Hue) ; *see above.*

41. *he* (*for* hue,

Whether I were chosen or nouȝt chosen; · on Holicherche I
thouȝte, 112

That vnderfonge me atte fonte · for one of goddis chosen;
For Cryste cleped vs alle · come if we wolde,
Sarasenes and scismatikes · and so he dyd the Iewes,

O vos omnes scicientes, venite, &c.;

And badde hem souke for synne · sauȝly at his breste, 116
And drynke bote for bale · brouke it who so myȝte.

‘Thanne may alle Crystene come,’ quod I · ‘and cleyne
there entre

By the blode that he bouȝte vs with · and thorough baptesme after,

Qui crediderit & baptizatus fuerit, &c.

For though a Crystene man coueyted · his Crystenedome to reneye,
Riȝtfulliche to reneye · no resoun it wolde. 121

For may no cherle chartre make · ne his catel selle
With-uten leue of his lorde · no lawe wil it graunte.

Ac he may renne in arrerage · and rowme so fro home,
And as a reneyed caityf · recchelesly gon aboute; 125

Ac Resoun shal rekne with hym · and rebuken hym at the laste,
And Conscience a-counte with hym · and casten hym in arrerage,
And putten hym after in a prisone · in purgatorie to brenne,
For his arrerages rewarden hym there · to the daye of dome,

But if Contricioun wol come · and crye, bi his lyue, 130
Mercy for his mysdedes · with mouth or with herte.’

‘That is soth,’ seyde Scripture · ‘may no synne lette
Mercy alle to amende · and mekenesse hir folwe, 133

For they beth as owre bokes telleth · aboue goddes werkes,

Misericordia eius super omnia opera eius.’

‘Ȝeel baw for bokes!’ quod one · was broken oute of helle,
Hiȝte *Troianus*, had ben a trewe knyȝte · toke witnesse at a pope,
How he was ded and dampned · to dwellen in pyne, 137

For an vncristene creature; · —‘clerkis wyten the sothe,
That al the clergie vnder Cryste · ne miȝte me cracche fro helle,

But onliche loue and leaute · and my lawful domes. 140

B. 126, 127. and rebuken—acounte with hym in R only. 128. hym
WROB; L om. 130. wel (for wol) L. 139. ne W; LCROB om.

Whether ich were chose other nat chose; · on Holy-churche
ich thouhte,

That vnderfong me atte fount · for on of godes chosene. 52

‘For Crist clepide ous alle · come yf we wolde,
Sarrasyns and scismatikes · and so he dude the Iewes,
And bad hem souken of hus brest · sauete for synne,
And drynke bote for bale · brouke hit ho so myghte; 56

O uos omnes sitientes, uenite ad aquas!

Thenne may alle Cristine come · and cleyne ther to entre
By that blod that he boughte ous with · and baptisme, as he
tauhte,

Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit, saluus erit, & cetera.

For thauh a Crystine man coueytede · hus Crystendome to reneye,
Ryghtfulliche to reneye · no reson hit wolde. 60

For may no cherl a chartre make · ne hus catel selle
With-oute leue of the lorde · no lawe wolde hit graunte.
Ac he may renne in arerage · and rome fro home
As a recheles caitif · other reneyed, as hit semeth; 64
Ac Reson shal rekene with hym · and rebuke him atte laste,
And Conscience a-counte with hym · and caste him in arerages,
And putte hym thenne in prison · in purgatorie to brenne,
Rewardynge him ther for hus rechelesnesse · ryght to the day
of dome, 68

Bote Contricion and Confession · crye, by hus lyue,
Mercy for hus mysdedes · with mouthe and with herte.’

‘That is sothe,’ seide Scripture · ‘may no synne lette
Mercy, that hue nel al amende · yf meeknesse here folwe; 72
Thei bothe, as our bookes telleth · aren aboue godes werkes;

Misericordia eius super omnia opera eius.

‘Ye, baw for bookes!’ quath on · was broken out of helle—
‘Ich, *Troianus*, a trewe knyght · ich take witness of a pope,
How ich was ded, and dampned · to dwellen in helle 76
For an vncristene creature; · seynt Gregorie wot the sothe,
That al the Cristendome vnder Crist · ne myghte cracche me
thennes,

Bote onliche loue and leaute · as in my lawes demynge!

C. 57. come IMTFS; P *om.* 58. *saluus erit* MFE; P *om.* 61.
cheerl P. 62. With-ouhte P. 63. arerage KMS; arrirage P. 66.
in MITSF; P *om.* 71. PE insert the *before* sothe. 73. bepe (*for* bope) P.
75. P *om.* 2nd a. 78. cracche MFSEK; cacche P.

Gregorie wist this wel · and wilned to my soule
 Sauacioun, for sothenesse · that he seigh in my werkes.
 And, after that he wepte · and wilned me were graunted
 Grace, wyth-outen any bede-byddyng · his bone was vnderfongen,
 And I saued, as ȝe may se · with-oute syngyng of masses; 145
 By loue, and by lernyng · of my lyuyng in treuthe,
 Brouȝte me fro bitter peyne · there no biddyng myȝte.'

'Lo, ȝe lordes, what leute did · by an emperoure of Rome,
 That was an vncrystene creature · as clerkes fyndeth in bokes.
 Nouȝt thorw preyere of a pope · but for his pure treuthe 150
 Was that Sarasene saued · as seynt Gregorie bereth witnesse.
 Wel ouȝte ȝe lordes, that lawes kepe · this lessoun to haue in
 mynde, 152

And on *Troianus* treuth to thenke · and do treuthe to the peple.

This matir is merke for mani of ȝow · ac, men of holy cherche,
 The Legende *Sanctorum* ȝow lereth · more larger than I ȝow telle!
 Ac thus lele loue · and lyuyng in treuthe 156
 Pulte oute of pyne · a paynym of Rome.

I-blessed be treuthe · that so brak helle-ȝates,
 And saued the Sarasyn · fram Sathanas and his power,
 There no clergie ne couthe · ne kunnyng of lawes. 160
 Loue and leute · is a lele science;

For that is the boke blessed · of blisse and of ioye:—
 God wrouȝt it and wrot hit · with his on fynger,
 And toke it Moyses vpon the mount · alle men to lere. 164

"Lawe with-outen loue," quod *Troianus* · "leye there a bene,
 Or any science vnder sonne · the seuene artz and alle,
 But if thei ben lerned for owre lordes loue · loste is alle the
 tyme:—"—

For no cause to cacche siluer there-by · ne to be called a mayster,
 But al for loue of owre lorde · and the bet to loue the peple. 169
 For seynte Iohan seyde it · and soth aren his wordes,

"*Qui non diligit, manet in morte*—

Who so loueth nouȝte, leue me · he lyueth in deth-deyinge"—
 And that alle manere men · enemys and frendes, 172
 Louen her eyther other · and lene hem as her-selue.

Who so leneth nouȝte, he loueth nouȝte · god wote the sothe,
 And comaundeth eche creature · to confourme hym to loue,

Gregore wiste this wel · and wilnede to my soule 80
 Sauacion, for the sothness · that he seiþ in myn werkes;
 And for he wilnede wepyng · that ich were saued,
 God of hus goodnesse · seiþ hus grete wil;
 With-oute moo bedes-byddyng · hus bone was vnderfonge, 84
 And ich ysaued, as ȝe may see · with-oute syngyng of masse.
 Loue, withoute leel by-leyue · and my lawe ryghtful
 Sauede me Sarrasyn · soule and body bothe.
 ‘Lo, lordes! what Leaute dude · and leel dom y-used! 88

Wel auhte ȝe lordes that lawes kepen · this lesson to haue in
 mynde,
 And on *Troianus* treuthe to thenke · alle tymes of ȝoure lyue,
 And loue for ȝoure lordes loue · and do leaute euere more.

For lawe with-oute leaute · leye ther a bene! 92
 Other eny science vnder sonne · the seuene ars and alle,
 Bote loue and leaute hem lede · y-lost is al the tyme
 Of hym that traueleth ther-on · bote treuthe be hus lyuyng.
 Lo, loue and leaute · been oure lordes bookes, 96
 And Cristes owen cleregie · he cam fro heuene to tech: hit,
 And sitthe seynt Iohan · seide hit of hus techyng;
 “*Qui non diligit, manet in morte:*”

C. 80. wist P. 86. with (*for* withoute) P. 94. hem METK; hym P.
 95. hym SMFITK; hem PE. 98. hit is (*for* hit) P.

And souereynelyche pore poeple · and here ennemys after. 176
 For hem that hateth vs · is owre meryte to louye,
 And pore peple to plesse; · here prayeres may vs helpe.
 For owre ioye and owre hele · Iesu Cryst of heuene,
 In a pore mannes apparaille · pursueth vs euere, 180
 And loketh on vs in her liknesse · and that with louely chere,
 To knowen vs by owre kynde herte · and castyng of owre eyen,
 Whether we loue the lordes here · byfor owre lorde of blisse;
 And exciteth vs bi the euangelye · that, when we maken festes,
 We shulde nouzte clepe owre kynne ther-to · ne none kynnes riche;

"Cum facitis conuiuia, nolite inuitare amicos;

Ac calleth the careful ther-to · the croked and the pore, 186
 For 3owre frendes wil feden 3ow · and sonde 3ow to quite
 3owre festyng and 3owre faire 3ifte; · vche frende quyteth so other.
 Ac for the pore I shal paye · and pure wel quyte her trauaille,
 That 3iueth hem mete or moneye · and loueth hem for my sake."
 For the best ben somme riche · and somme beggers and pore.
 For alle are we Crystes creatures · and of his coffres riche,
 And bretheren as of o blode · as wel beggares as erles. 193
 For on Caluarye of Crystes blode · Crystenedome gan spryng,
 And bloody bretheren we bycome there · of o body ywonne,
 As *quasi modo geniti* · and gentil men vche one, 196
 No beggere ne boye amonges vs · but if it synne made;

Qui facit peccatum, seruus est peccati, &c.

In the olde lawe · as holy lettre telleth,
 Mennes sones · men called vs vchone,
 Of Adames issue and Eue · ay til god-man deyde; 200
 And after his resurreccioun · *Redemptor* was his name,
 And we his bretheren, thourgh hym ybouzt · bothe riche and pore.
 For-thi loue we as leue bretheren shal · and vche man laughe
 vp other,

And of that eche man may forbere · amende there it nedeth, 204
 And euery man helpe other · for hennes shal we alle;

Alter alterius onera portate.

And be we nouzte vnkynde of owre catel · ne of owre kunnyng
 neyther,

For noot no man how neighe it is · to be ynome fro bothe.
 For-thi lakke no lyf other · though he more Latyne knowe, 208

And nameliche poure people · here preiours may ous helpen ;

For god, as the godspel seith · goth ay as in the poure, 100

And, as the euangelist wytnesseth · whan we maken festes,
We sholde nat clypie knyghtes ther-to · ne no kyne ryche ;

"Cum facitis conuiuium, nolite uocare amicos diuites, &c. ;

Ac calleth the carful ther-to · the crokede and the poure.
For eche frend fedeth other · and fondeth how he may quite 104
Meles and manshupes · eche a ryche man other ;
Ac, for the poure may nat paye · ich wol paye my-self ;
That louyeth and leneth hem · largeliche shal ich quite."

At Caluarie, of Cristes blood · Cristendome gan sprynge, 108
And blod-brethrene by-cam we ther · of on body wonne,
As *quasi modo geniti* · gentel men echone ;
No begger ne boye among ous · bote yf synne hit make ;

Qui facit peccatum, seruus est peccati.

In the olde lawe, as the lettre telleth · menne sones me cald ous,
Of Adames ysshue and Eue · ay til god-man deide, 113
And after hus resureccion · *Redemptor* was hus name,
And we hus bloody brethren · as wel beggers as lordes.
For-thy loue we as leue children · and lene hem that nedeth, 116

And euery man help other · for hennes shulleth we alle
To haue as we han deserued · as holychurche wittnesseth,

*Et qui bona egerunt, ibunt in uitam eternam ; qui vero
mala, in ignem eternum.*

C. 102. *diuites* in E only.
om. and the, which ITS retain.
om. we. nudeth (for nedeth) P.

111. PE add is after ous.

113. Of MFSKT ; And PE.

118. *qui—eternum* in S only.

112. PEMK

116. PE.

Ne vnder-nym nouzte foule · for is none with-oute faute.
 For what euere clerkis carpe · of Crystenedome or elles,
 Cryst to a comune woman seyde · in comune at a feste,
 That *fides sua* shulde sauen hir · and saluen hir of alle synnes. 212

Thanne is byleue a lele helpe · aboue logyke or lawe;
 Of logyke ne of lawe · in *Legenda Sanctorum*
 Is litel allowaunce made · but if bileue hem helpe.
 For it is ouerlonge ar logyke · any lessoun assoille, 216
 And lawe is loth to louye · but if he lacche syluer.
 Bothe logyke and lawe · that loueth nouzte to lye,
 I conseilte alle Crystene · cleue nouzte ther-on to sore.
 For sum wordes I fynde ywryten · were of faithes techynge,
 That saued synful men · as seynt Iohan bereth wytnesse; 221

Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis, remecietur vobis.

For-thi lerne we the lawe of loue · as owre lorde tauzte,
 And as seynte Gregory seide · for mannes soule helthe,

Melius est scrutari scelera nostra, quam naturas rerum.

Why I moue this matere · is moste for the pore, 224
 For in her lyknesse owre lorde · ofte hath ben y-knowe.
 Witnesse in the Paske-wyke · whan he ȝede to Emaus;
 Cleophas ne knewe hym nauzte · that he Cryste were,
 For his pore paraille · and pylgrymes wedes, 228
 Tyl he blessed and brak · the bred that thei eten.
 So bi his werkes thei wisten · that he was Iesus;
 Ac by clothyng thei knewe hym nouzte · ne bi carpyng of tonge.

And al was in ensample · to vs synful here, 232
 That we shulde be low · and loueliche of speche,
 And apparaille vs nouzte ouer proudly · for pylgrymes ar we alle;
 And in the apparaille of a pore man · and pilgrymes lyknesse
 Many tyme god hath ben mette · amonge nedý peple, 236
 There neuere segge hym seigh · in secte of the riche.

Seynt Iohan and other seyntes · were seyne in pore clothyng,
 And as pore pilgrymes · preyed mennes godis.

Iesu Cryste on a Iewes douzter alyzte · gentil woman though she
 were, 240

Was a pure pore mayde · and to a pore man wedded.

Martha on Marye Magdeleyne · an huge pleynte she made,
 And to owre saueour self · seyde thise wordes,

Domine, non est tibi cure quod soror mea reliquit me solam ministrare, &c.

For-thi lerne we lawe of loue · as oure lord tauhte;
 The poure people faile we nat · whil eny peny ous lasteth. 120

For in here liknesse oure lorde · lome hath be knowe;
 Witnesse in the Paske-woke · when he ȝeode to Emaus;
 Cleophas ne knew hym nat · that he Crist were,
 For hus poure aparail · and pilgrimes clothes, 124
 Til that he blessedde here bred · and brak hit by-twyne hem.
 So by hus werkes thei wiste · that he was Iesus;
 Ac by hus clothing thei knewe hym nat · so caitifliche he ȝede.
 Al was ensample sothliche · to ous synful here, 128
 We sholde be lowe and loueliche · and leel, eche man to other,
 And pacient as pilgrimes · for pilgrimes arn we alle.
 In the parail of a pilgrim · and in a poure liknesse
 Holy seyntes hym seih · ac neuere in secte of riche. 132
 And seynte Marie hus moder · as Matheu bereth witnesse,
 Was a pure poure mayde · and to a poure man ywedded.
 Martha on Marie Magdalene · an huge pleynte hue made,
 And to oure saueour selue · saide these wordes: 136

Domine, non est tibi cure quod soror mea reliquit me solam ministrare?

B. 243. *sola* L.
 MFTSK; PE *om.*
this line.

C. 120. PE *om.* we.
 135. PE *om.* hue.

131. licknesse P. 133. as
 136. *From* IKSTGM; PE *om.*

And hastiliche god answered · and eytheres wille folwed, 244
 Bothe Marthaes and Maries · as Mathew bereth witnesse,
 Ac pouerte god put bifore · and preysed it the bettre;

Maria optimam partem elegit, que non auferetur ab ea.

And alle the wyse that euere were · by auzte I can aspye,
 Preysen pouerte for best lyf · if pacience it folwe, 248
 And bothe bettere and blisseder · by many folde than ricchesse.
 Al though it be soure to suffre · there cometh swete after;
 As on a walnot with-oute · is a bitter barke,
 And after that bitter barke · (be the shelle awaye), 252
 Is a kinnelle of conforte · kynde to restore;
 So is, after, pouerte or penaunce · pacientlyche ytake.

For it maketh a man to haue mynde in gode · and a grete wille
 To wepe and to wel bydde · wher-of wexeth mercy, 256
 Of which Cryst is a kinnelle · to conforte the soule.

And wel sykerer he slepyth · the segge that is pore,
 And lasse he dredeth deth · and in derke to be robbed,
 Than he that is rizte ryche · resoun bereth wytnesse; 260
Pauper ego ludo, dum tu diues meditaris.

Al though Salamon seide · as folke seeth in the bible,

Diuicias nec paupertates, &c.,

Wyser than Salamon was · bereth witnesse and tauzte,
 That parfyte pouert was · no possessioun to haue, 264
 And lyf moste lykyng to god · as Luke bereth witnesse,

Si vis perfectus esse, vade & vende, &c.;

And is to mene to men · that on this molde lyuen,
 Who so wil be pure parfyt · mote possessioun forsake,
 Or selle it, as seith the boke · and the syluer dele 268
 To beggeres that gone and begge · and bidden good for goddes
 loue.

For failed neuere man mete · that myztful god serued;

Non vidi iustum derelictum, nec semen eius querens panem;

As Daud seith in the sauter · to suche that ben in wille
 To serue god godeliche · ne greueth hym no penaunce, 272

Nichil impossibile volenti,

Ne lakketh neuere lyflode · lynnenn ne wollen,

Inquirentes autem dominum non minuentur omni bono.

B. 246. *auferetur*—*ea* COB; L *om.*
 cf. l. 237. 270. *Non*—*panem* in O only.

258. *segge* R; *man* LWCOB;

And here aitheres wil · hasteliche god a-soilede,
 And aitheres werkes and wil · ryght wel he alowede;
 Ac god putte pouerte by-fore · and preouede hit for the bettere;

Maria optimam partem elegit, que non auferetur ab ea.

And alle the wise that euere were · by ouht ich can asprie,
 Preisede pouerte for beste · yf pacience hit folwe, 141
 And bothe bettere and blessedere · by meny folde than richesse;
 Thauh hit be sour to suffre · ther cometh a swete after.

As in a walnote, with-oute · ys a byter barke, 144
 And after that biter barke · (be the shale aweye),
 Ys a curnel of comfort · kynde to restorie;
 So, after, pouerte and penaunce · pacientliche ytake,
 Maketh man haue mynde in god · and hus mercy craue, 148

The whiche is curnel of comfort · for alle Cristene saules.
 And wel sykerour he slepeth · the seg that is poure,
 And lasse drat by daye · other in derk to be robbed,
 Than he that ys ryht ryche · reson bereth wittnesse; 152
Pauper ego ludo · dum tu diues meditaris.

Holichurche wittnesseth · “ho so for-saketh
 Hus fader other hus frendes · fremde othere sibbe,
 Other eny welthe in this worlde · hus wyf other hus children,
 For the loue of oure lorde · loweth hym to be poure, 157
 He shal haue an hundredfolde · of heuene-ryche blisse,
 And lif lastyng for euere · by-fore oure lorde in heuene;

Quicumque reliquerit patrem & matrem,” &c.

Crist a-cordeth eft her-with · clerkes witen the sothe, 160
 What god hym-self saide · to a seg that he louede;
 “Yf the lyketh,” quath god, “to lyue · the lif that is parfit,
 Al that thow hast here · hasteliche go sulle hit;

C. 137. aithere (*for aitheres*) P; *see next line.* 147. ytake EIKST;
 take P. 151. deerck P. 155. fremde MT; *miswritten* frende PEIFK.
 159. *reliquerit* MFES; *relinquet* P. 160. whiten P.

If prestes weren parfyt · thei wolde no syluer take
For masses ne for matynes · nouzte her mete of vsureres,
Ne neither kirtel ne cote · theigh they for colde shulde deye,
And thei her deuoir dede · as Dauid seith in the sauter, 277
Iudica me, deus, et discerne causam meam.

[*Continued on p. 356.*]

ȝeue poure people the pans · ther-of porse thow none, 164
 Ac ȝeue hem forth to poure folke · that for my loue hit asketh.
 For-sake al and suwe me · and so is thi beſte;

Si uis perfectus esse, uade & uende omnia que habes."

Thus consaileth Crist · in comun ous alle:—

"Ho so coueyteth to come · to my kynriche, 168
 He mot for-sake hym-self · hus suster and hus brother,
 And al that the worlde wolde · and my wil folwen,

Nisi renunciaueritis omnibus que possidetis," &c.

Meny prouerbis ich myghte haue · of meny holy seyntes,
 To testifie for treuthe · the tale that ich shewe, 172
 And poetes to preouen hit · Porfirie and Plato;
 Aristotile, Ouidius · and elleuene hundred,
 Tullius, Tholomeus · ich can nat telle here names,
 Preouen pacient pouerte · pryns of alle vertues. 176

And by the greyn that groweth · god ous alle techeth
 Mischeifs on this molde · mekeliche to suffre:

*Nisi granum frumenti cadens in terra mortuum fuerit,
 ipsum solum manet;*

Bote yf the sed that sowen is · in the sloh sterue,
 Shal neuere spir springen vp · ne spik on strawe curne; 180
 Sholde neuere whete wexe · bote whete fyrste deyde.
 And other sedes al-so · in the same wyse,
 That ben leide on lough erthe · ylore as hit were;
 And thorw the grete grace of god · of greyn ded in erthe 184
 Atte laste launceth vp · wher-by we lyuen alle.
 Ac seedes that been sowen · and mowe suffre wyntres,
 Aren tydyour and tower · to mannes by-hofthe,
 Than seedes that sowen beeth · and mowe nouht with forstes,
 With wyndes ne with wederes · as in wynter-tyme; 189
 As, lynne-seed and lik-seed · and lente-seedes alle
 Aren nouht so worthy as whete · ne so wel mowen
 In the feld with the forst · and hit freese longe. 192
 Ryght so, for sothe · that suffre may penaunces
 Worth alowed of oure lorde · at here laste ende;
 And for here penaunce be preysed · as for a pure martir,

C. 166. *que habes* in S only. 170. *omnibus* EFS; *omnia* PMIKT.
 172. *testefie* P. 177. PE *om.* the. 178. *From* MIKTG; PE *om.* *this line*.
 179. *that* (*for 1st the*) P. 185. *Atte the* P. PE *om.* *we.* 188. *forstes*
 EKG; *forste* P. 195. PE *om.* *a.*

Other for a confessour ykud · that counteth nat a ruysshe 196
 Fere, ne famyne · ne false menne tonges;
 Bote as an hosebonde hopeth · after an hard wynter,
 Yf god gyueth hym the lif · to haue a good heruest,
 So preoueth these prophetes · that pacientliche suffreth. 200
 Myschiefs and myshappes · and menye tribulacions
 By-tokneth ful treweliche · in tyme comynge after
 Murthe for hus mornynge · and that muche plente.
 For Crist seide to hus seyntes · that for hus sake tholeden 204
 Pouerte and penaunce · and persecucion of body,
 Schullen haue more worschipe to wages · [and worthier ben yholde]
 Than angeles—in here angre · on this wise hem grette,

“ *Tristitia uestra uerletur in gaudium :*

3oure sorwe in-to solas · shal turne atte laste, 208
 And out of wo in-to wele · 3oure wyrdes shul chaunge.”
 Ac who so redeth of the riche · the reuers he may fynde,
 How god, as the godspel telleth · gyueth hem foul towname,
 And that hus gost shal go · and hus good by-leue, 212
 And asketh hym after · “ho shal hit haue,
 The catel that he kepeth so · in coffres and in bernes?
 And art so loth to leue · that leue shalt needes:

*O stulle, ista nocte anima tua egredietur; que congregasti,
 cuius erunt? Thesaurizat, & ignorat cui, &c.*

An vnredy reue · thi residue shal spene, 216
 That menye moththe was maister ynne · in a mynte-while;
 Vp-holderes on the hul · shullen haue hit to selle.”

Lo, lo, lordes, lo · and ladies, taketh hede,
 Hit lasteth nat longe · that is lycour swete, 220
 As pees-coddes and pere-Ionettes · plomes and chiries!
 That lyghtliche launceth vp · litel while dureth,
 And that that rathest rypeth · roteth most saunest.
 On fat londe and ful of donge · foulest wedes groweth; 224
 Right so for sothe · suche that ben bysshopes,
 Erles and archedekenes · and other ryche clerkes,

C. 200. these MKFS; thees P. 205. and MIFTSG; KPE om. (twice).
 penaunce MIFTSG; penaunces PE. 206. Schullen—wages I (the line being
 imperfect; other copies omit the line). [and—yholde] supplied from conjecture.
 207. Than I; Thanne T; PEKMS om. 210. P om. who. PE om. 1st the.
 215. ert (for art) PEK. que—erunt in E only. cui in S only. 217.
 PE om. maister.

That chaffaren as chapmen · and chiden bote thei wyne,
 And hauen the worlde at here wil · other-wyse to lyue. 228
 Right as weodes wexen · in wose and in donge,
 So of rychesse vpon richesse · arisen al vices.
 Lo, lond ouere-layde · with marle and with donge,
 Whete that wexeth ther-on · worth lygge ar hit ripe; 232
 Right so, for sothe · for to sygge treuthe,
 Ouer-plente pryde norssheth · ther pouerte destrueth hit.
 For, how hit euere be ywonne · bote hit be wel dispended,
 Worldliche wele is wicked thyng · to hym that hit kepeth. 236
 For yf he be fer ther-fro · ful ofte hath he drede
 That fals folke fecche away · felonliche hus godes;
 And 3ut more hit maketh men · meny tyme and ofte
 To synegen, and to souchen · soteltees of gyle, 240
 For couetyze of that catel · to culle hem that hit kepeth;
 And so is meny man ymorthred · for hus money and goodes,
 And tho that duden the dede · ydampned ther-fore after,
 And he for hus harde holdynge · in helle, par aunter. 244
 So couetise of catel · was combraunce to hem alle;
 Lo, how pans purchasede · faire places and drede,
 That rote is of robbers · the richesse with-ynne!
 For he that gadereth so his good · god no-tyng preiseth. 248

Hic explicit passus iijus de dowel.

C. 230. arisen M; ariseth G; arist PEIKT (*badly*). 232. repe (*for*
 ripe) P. 236. Worliche P. 242. men (*for man*) P. 247. PE *om.* of.
 248. *In M only.*

PASSUS XIV.

Incipit passus quartus de Dowel.

AC wel worth Pouerte! · for he may walke vnrobbed
 Among pilours in pees · yf pacience hym folwe.
 Oure prynce Iesu pouerte chees · and hus aposteles alle,
 And ay the lenger thei lyueden · the lasse good thei hadde; 4

Tanquam nichil habentes, & omnia possidentes.

3ut men rat that Abraam and Iob · were wonder·ryche,
 And out of numbre tho men · menye meobles hadden.
 Abraam for al hus god · hadde mucche teene,
 In gret pouerte he was yput; · a pryns, as hit were, 8
 By-nom hym ys housewif · and heeld here hym-self,
 And Abraam nat hardy · ones to letten hym,
 Ne for brightnesse of here beaute · here spouse to be by-knowe.
 And for he suffrede and seide nouht · our lord sente tokne, 12
 That the kynge cride · to Abraam mercy,
 And deliuerede hym hus wif · with mucche welthe after.
 And also Iob the gentel · what Ioye hadde he on erthe,
 How bittere he hit bouhte · as the book telleth! 16
 And for he songe in hus sorwe · "*si bona accepimus a domino,*
Dere-worthe dere god! do we so mala,"
 Al hus sorwe to solas · thorgh that songe turnede,
 And Iob by-cam a Iolif man · and al hus Ioye newe. 20
 Lo, how pacience in here pouerte · these patriarkes releuede,
 And brouhte hem al aboue · that in bale rotede.
 As greyn that lyth in the greot · and thorgh grace, atte laste,
 Spryngeth vp and spredeth · so spedde the fader Abraam, 24
 And al-so the gentel Iob; · here Ioie hath non ende.

Ac leueth nouht, 3e lewede men · that ich lacke richesse,
 Thauh ich preise pouerte thus · and preoue hit by ensamples
 Worthiour, as by holy writ · and wise philosopheres. 28
 Bothe two beth goode · be 3e ful certayn,
 And lyues that our lorde loueth · and large weyes to heuene.

C. 1. vnrobbede P.
 that of (*wrongly*) PE.
accipiam P.

5. rat that MKT; ret that I; reedith that FG;
 8. PE *om.* he.

17. *accepimus* MKFETG;
 29. beth ES; ben MIT; *miswritten* but P.

Ac the poure pacient · purgatorye passeth
 Rathere than the ryche · thauh thei renne at ones. 32

For yf a marchaunt and a messenger · metten to-gederes,
 And scholde wenden o way · where both mosten reste,
 And rekene byfore reson · a resonable acounte,
 What one hath, what another hath · and what hy hadde bothe,
 The marchante mote nede be lette · lengere then the messagere;
 For the parcels of hus paper · and other pryuey dettes
 Wol lette hym, as ich leyue · the lengthe of a myle.
 The messenger doth na more · bote with hus mouth telleth 40
 Hus erande, and hus lettere sheweth · and is a-non delyuered.
 And thauh thei wende by the wey · tho two to-gederes,
 Thauh the messenger make hus wey · a-myddre the whete,
 Wole no wys man wroth be · ne hus wed take; 44
 Ys non haiwarde yhote · hus wed for to take;

Necessitas non habet legem.

Ac yf the marchaunt make hus way · ouere menne corne,
 And the haywarde happe · with hym for to mete,
 Other hus hatt other hus hode · othere elles hus gloues 48
 The marchaunt mot for-go · other moneye of hus porse,
 And ȝut be lett, as ich leyue · for the lawe asketh
 Marchauns for here merchaundise · in meny place to tollen.
 ȝut thauh thei wenden on way · as to Wynchestre fayre, 52
 The marchaunt with hus merchaundise · may nat go so swithe
 As the messenger may · ne with so mochel ese.
 For that on bereth bote a boxe · a breuet ther-ynne,
 Ther the marchaunt ledeth a male · with meny kynne thynges,
 And dredeth to be ded there-fore · and he in derke mete 57
 With robbours and reuers · that riche men dispoilen;
 Ther the messenger is ay murye · hus mouthe ful of songes,
 And leyueh for hus letteres · that no wight wol hym greue. 60
 Ac ȝut, myghte the merchaunt · thorgh monye and other ȝiftes,
 Haue hors and hardy men; · thauh he mette theoues,
 Wolde non suche a-sailen hym · for hem that hym folweth,
 As saffliche passe as the messenger · and as sone at hus hostil.

C. 35. acounte MIKF; aountes P. 40. P om. with. 41. erende IK;
 lettere PE. lettre KT; erande E; ernde P. 43. amyde P. 48. hode
 EK; hood ITFS; hed (!) P. 51. tollen TESH; tullen P. 58. P inserts
 with before reuers. 60. For wight perhaps read lede, as in T. 61. ȝeftes P.

3e wyten wel, 3e wyse men · what this is to mene, 65
 The marchaunt is no more to mene · bote men that ben ryche
 Aren a-countable to Crist · and to the kyng of heuene,
 That holden mote the heye weye · euene the ten hestes, 68
 Bothe louye and lene · the leelle and the vnleelle,
 And haue reuthe, and releue · with hus grete richesse,
 By hus power, alle manere men · in meschief yfalle ;
 Fynde beggars bred · backes for the colde, 72
 Tythen here goodes treweliche · a tol, as hit semeth,
 That oure lord loketh after · of eche a lyf that wynneth
 With-oute wyles other wrong · other wommen atte stuwes ;
 And 3ut more, to make pees · and quyte menne dettes, 76
 Bothe spele and spare · to spene vpon the needful,
 As Crist himself comaundeth · to alle Cristene people,

Alter alterius onera portate, et sic adimplebitis legem Christi.

The messagers aren the mendinans · that lyueth by menne
almesse,

Beth nat ybounde as beth the riche · to bothe the two lawes, 80
 To lene ne to lere · ne lentenes to faste,
 And othere pryuey penaunces · the whiche the preest wot wel
 That the lawe 3eueth leue · suche lowe folke to be excused ;
 As, none tythes to tythen · ne clothe the nakede, 84
 Ne in enquestes to come · ne *contumax*, thauh he worche
 Haly day other holy eue · hus mete to deserue.

For yf he loueth and by-leyueth · as the lawe techeth,

Qui crediderit & baptizatus fuerit, saluus erit, &c.,

Telleth the lord a tale · as a trewe messenger, 88
 And sheweth by seel and sitthe by lettere · with what lord he
 dwelleth,

Knowelecheth hym Cristene · and of holy kirke by-leyue,
 Ther is no lawe, as ich leyue · wol lette hym the gate,
 Ther god is gatwarde hym-self · and eche a gome knoweth ; 92
 The porter of pure reuthe · may parforme the lawe,
 In that he wilneth and wolde · ech wight as him-self.
 For the wil is as muche worth · of a wrecche beggere,
 As al that the ryche may reyme · and ryghtfulliche dele ; 96

C. 68. PES *om.* and the. 73. tryweliche P. 78. P *om.* him in himself.
et-christi in F only. 80. beeth P. 87. *saluus erit* MF ; P *om.*
 90. Knowelecheth KF ; Kneweleche PE. kirke I ; churche PEFS.

And as much mede · for a myte that he offreth
 As the riche man for al his moneye · and more, as by the
 godspel;

*Amen dico uobis, quia hec uidua paupercula misit plus
 omnibus qui miserunt in gasophilacium;*

So that poure pacient · is parfitest lif of alle,
 And alle parfite preestes · to pouerte sholde drawe; 100

[Continued on p. 357.]

[Continued from p. 348.]

Spera-in-deo speketh of prestes · that haue no spendyng-syluer,
That ȝif thei trauaille trewlich · and trusten in god almiȝti,
Hem shulde lakke no lyflode · noyther wollen ne lynnē. 280
And the title that ȝe take ordres by · telleth ȝe ben auaunced;
Thanne nedeth nouȝte ȝow to take syluer · for masses that ȝe
syngen.

For he that toke ȝow ȝowre tytle · shulde take ȝow ȝowre wages,
Or the bisshop that blesseth ȝow · if that ȝe ben worthy. 284

For made neuere kyngē no knyȝte · but he hadde catel to
spende,

As bifel for a kniȝte · or fonde hym for his strengthe;
It is a careful knyȝte · and of a caytyue kynges makynge,
That hath no londe ne lynage riche · ne good loos of his handes.
The same I segge for sothe · by alle suche prestes, 289
That han noyther kunnyngē ne kynne · but a croune one,
And a tytle, a tale of nouȝte · to his lyflode at myschiefe,
He hath more bileue, as I leue · to lacche thorw his croune
Cure, than for konnyng · or— ‘knownen for clene of berynge.’
I haue wonder for why · and wher-fore the bisshop
Maketh suche prestes · that lewed men bytrayen.

A chartre is challengeable · byfor a chief iustice; 296
If false Latyne be in the lettre · the lawe it inpugneth,
Or peynted parenterlinarie · or parces ouer-skipped;
The gome that gloseth so chartres · for a goky is holden.
So is it a goky, by god · that in his gospel failleth, 300
Or in masse or in matynes · maketh any defaute,

Qui offendit in vno, in omnibus est reus, etc.

And also in the sauter · seyth Dauyd to ouerskippers,

*Psallite deo nostro, psallite; quoniam rex terre deus israel;
psallite sapienter.*

The bisshop shal be blamed · bifor god, as I leue,
That crouneth suche goddes kniȝtes · that conneth nouȝt *sapienter*
Synge ne psalmes rede · ne segge a messe of the day. 305
Ac neuer neyther is blameles · the bisshop ne the chapleyne,
For her eyther is endited · and that of ‘*ignorancia*
Non excusat episcopos · nec idiotas prestes.’ 308

B. 281. ye WR; þei LCOB (for 1st ȝe). 285. no kyngē no L. 294. for
W; & L. 298. or W; LRCOB om.

[Continued from p. 355.]

For *spera-in-deo* speketh of prestes · that han no spendyng-selucr.
 That yf thay trauaile treweliche · and tristen in god almyghty,
 Hem sholde neuere lackye lyflode · nother lynnē ne wollene.
 The title that ȝe taketh ȝoure ordres by · telleth ȝe beth
 auaunced, 104

And needeth nat to nyme seluer · for masses that ȝe syngen ;
 For he that tok ȝow title · sholde take ȝow wages,
 Other the bisshop that blessed ȝow · and enbaumed ȝoure fyngeres.
 For made neuere kyng knyght · bote he hadde catel to
 spene,

As by-fel for a knyght · other fond hym for hus strengthe ; 109
 For hit is a carful knyght · and of a caitif kynges makynge,
 That hath no londe ne lynage riche · ne good loos of hus hondes.
 The same ich seye for sothe · by suche that ben preestes, 112
 That han nother konnyng ne kyn · bote a corone one,
 And a title, a tale of nouht · to hus liflode, as hit were.

Vuele ben thei suffred · suche that schenden masses
 Throgh hure luther lyuyng · and lewede vnder-stondyng ! 116

A charter is chalangable · by-fore a chief Iustice,
 Yf fals Latyn be in that lettere · the lawe hit enpugneth,
 Other peynted par-entrelignarie · parcels ouer-skipped ;
 The gome that so gloseth chartres · a goky he is yholden.
 So is he a goky, by god · that in the godspel failleth, 121
 In masse other in matynes · maketh eny defaute ;

Qui offendit in uno, in omnibus est reus.

And ouer-skippers al-so · in the sauter seith Dauid,
*Psallite deo nostro, psallite, quia rex terre deus ; psallite
 sapienter.*

The bishop shal be blamed · by-fore god, as ich leyue, 124
 That coroneth suche clerkes · as for godes knyghtes,
 That conneth nat *sapienter* · nother synge ne rede.
 Ac neyther is al blameles · the bisshop ne the chapeleyn ;
 For *ignorantia non excusat* · as ich haue herd in bookes.— 128

C. 104, 106. titile P. 104. auaunced MT ; anaunsed IKEG ; amanced P.
 114. titile P. 115. schenden EMS ; shynden P. 118. that lettere
 MIKSEG ; the letteres P. 123. *psallite sapienter* M.

This lokynge on lewed prestes · hath don me lepe fram pouerte,
The whiche I preyse there pacyence is · more parfyt than
ricchesse.'

Ac moche more in metynge thus · with me gan one dispute,
And slepyng I seigh al this · and sithen cam Kynde, 312
And nempned me by my name · and bad me nymen hede,
And thorw the wondres of this worlde · wytte for to take.
And on a mountaigne that Mydelerd hyzte · as me tho thouzte,
I was fette forth · by ensaumples to knowe, 316
Thorugh eche a creature and Kynde · my creatoure to louye.
I seigh the sonne and the see · and the sonde after,
And where that bryddes and bestes · by here makes thei zeden,
Wylde wormes in wodes · and wonderful foules, 320
With flekked fetheres · and of fele coloures.
Man and his make · I myzte bothe byholde;
Pouerte and plente · bothe pees and werre,
Blisse and bale · bothe I seigh at ones, 324
And how men token mede · and mercy refused.

Resoune I seighe sothly · suen alle bestes
In etynge, in drynkyng · and in engendryng of kynde;
And after course of concepcioun · none toke kepe of other, 328
As whan thei hadde ryde in rotey-tyme; · anon rizte ther-after,
Males drowen hem to males · a mornynge bi hem-self,
And in euenynges also · zede males fro femeles.
There ne was cow ne cowkynde · that conceyued hadde, 332
That wolde belwe after boles · ne bore after sowe;
Bothe horse and houndes · and alle other bestes
Medled nouzte wyth here makes · that with fole were.

Bridde I bihelde · that in buskes made nestes; 336
Hadde neuere wye witte · to worche the leest.
I hadde wonder at whom · and where the pye lerned
To legge the stykkes · in whiche she leyeth and bredeth;
There nys wrizte as I wene · shulde worche hir neste to paye;
If any masoun made a molde ther-to · moche wonder it were.

B. 319. makes W; make LCRO; see l. 335. 331. zede R; ze L. 339.
leyep W; leythe L.

Thus Rechelessnesse in a rage · a-resonede clergie,
 And scornede Scripture · that meny skyles shewede,
 Til that Kynde cam · Clergie to helpen,
 And in the myrour of Myddel-erde · made hym eft to loke, 132
 To knowe by ech creature · Kynde to louye.
 And ich bowede my body · by-holdyng al a-boute,
 And seih the sonne and the see · and the sand after,
 Wher that briddes and bestes · by here makes 3eden, 136
 Wilde wormes in wodes · and wonderful foules
 With fleckede fetheres · and of fele colours;
 Man and hus make · ich myghte see bothe,
 Pouerte and plente · bothe pees and werre, 140
 Blisse and biter bale · bothe ich seih at ones;
 And how that men mede token · and mercy refuseden.

Reson ich seih sothliche · suwen alle bestes
 In etyng, in drynkyng · in gendryng of kynde; 144
 After cours of concepcion · non tok kepe of other
 As when thei hadde ruteyed; · a-non thei resten after.
 Maules drowen hem to maules · on morwenyng by hem-self,
 And femeles to femeles · herdeyed and drow. 148
 Ther ne was kow ne kow-kynde · that conceyued hadde,
 That wolde bere after bole · ne bor after sowe.
 Ther was no kynne kynde · that conceyued hadde,
 That ne lees the lykyng of lust · of flesch, as hit were, 152
 Saue man and hus make; · and ther-of me wondrede.
 For out of reson thei ryde · and rechelesliche taken on,
 As in durne dedes · bothe drynkyng and elles.

Briddes ich by-helde · in bosshes maden nestes, 156
 Hadde neuere weye wit · to worche the leste.
 Ich hadde wonder at wham · and wher that the pye
 Lernede legge styckes · that leyen in here neste;
 Ther is no wryght, as ich wene · sholde worche here nest to paye.
 Yf eny mason therto · makede a molde 161
 With alle here wyse castes · wonder me thynketh!

C. 132. mydel P. 136. 3eden P. 138. fetthers P. 143. sauh (*for*
 seih) P; *see ll.* 135, 141. sothliche P. 144. in (*before* drynkyng) KES;
 and PTM. 150. wolde bere T; wuld bere S; beere P. 151. kynne
 MES; kynde P. 152. lust MIKST; loust P. 156. by-heelde P.
 neestes P. 158. wher · and at wham P (*only*); *the rest as in text.* 159.
 neste EIKSG; neestes P; *see next line.*

And ȝet me merueilled more · how many other briddes
 Hudden and hileden · her egges ful derne
 In mareys and mores · for men sholde hem nouȝt fynde, 344
 And hudden here egges · whan thei there-fro wente,
 For fere of other foules · and for wylde bestis.
 And some troden her makes · and on trees bredden,
 And brouȝten forth her bryddes so · al aboute the grounde; 348
 And some bryddes at the bille · thorwgh brethyng conceyued;
 And some kauked, I toke kepe · how pekokes bredden.
 Moche merueilled me · what maister thei hadde, 351
 And who tauȝte hem on trees · to tymbre so heighe,
 There noither buirn ne beste · may her briddes rechen.

And sythen I loked vpon the see · and so forth vpon the
 sterres, 354
 Many selcouthes I seygh · ben nought to seye nouthe.
 I seigh floures in the fritthe · and her faire coloures,
 And how amonge the grene grasse · grewe so many hewes,
 And somme soure and some swete · selcouthe me thouȝte;
 Of her kynde and her coloure · to carpe it were to longe.

Ac that moste moeued me · and my mode chaunged, 360
 That Resoun rewarded · and reuled alle bestes,
 Saue man and his make; · many tyme and ofte
 No resoun hem folwed · and thanne I rebuked
 Resoun, and riȝte · til hym-seluen I seyde, 364
 ‘I haue wonder of the,’ quod I · ‘that witty art holden,
 Why thow ne suwest man and his make · that no mysfait hem
 folwe?’

And Resoun arated me · and seyde, ‘recche the neuere, 367

And ȝut ich meruaillede more · menye of tho bryddes
 Hudden and heleden · durneliche here egges, 164
 For no foul sholde hem fynde · bote hus fere and hym-self.
 And some treden, ich tok kepe · and on trees bredden,
 And brouhten forth here bryddes · al aboue the grounde.
 In mareis and in mores · in myres and in wateres 168
 Dompynge dyueden; · ‘deere god,’ ich sayde,
 ‘Wher hadden these wilde suche witt · and at what scole?’
 And whan the pocok caukede · ther-of ich took kepe,
 How vn-corteisliche the cok · hus kynde forth strenede, 172
 And ferliche hadde of hus fairnesse · and of hus foule ledene.

And siththe ich loked on the see · and so forth on the sterres,
 Meny selcouth ich seih · aren nouht to seggen nouthe;
 Ne what on floures in feldes · and of hure faire coloures, 176
 How out of greot and of gras · grewe so meny huwes,
 Somme soure and somme swete · selcouth me thouhte;
 Of here kynde and of here colours · to carpen hit were to longe.

Ac that that moste meuede me · and my mod chaungede, 180
 Was that ich seih Reson · suwen alle bestes
 Saue man and mankynde; · meny tymes me thouhte,
 Reson rewelede hem nat · nother riche ne poure.
 Then ich aresonede Reson · and right til hym ich seide, 184
 ‘Ich haue wonder in my witt · so wis as thow art holde,
 Wher-for and why · so wide as thow regnest,
 That thow ne ruelest rather · renkes than other beestes?
 For ich see noone so ofte sorfeten · sothliche so mankynde;
 In mete out of mesure · and meny tymes in drynke, 189
 In wommen, in wedes · and in wordes bothe
 Thei ouerdon hit day and nyght · and so doth noon othere.
 Bestes ruwelen hem al by reson · and renkes ful fewe. 192
 And ther-fore meruailleth me · for man, as in makynge,
 Is most yliche the · in wit and in werkes,
 Whi he ne loueth thy lore · and lyueth as thow techest?’
 And Reson aresonede me · and seide, ‘recche the neuere 196

C. 169. dyuyden P; dyuede IT; diuyde K. 170. these MKS; thees P.
 172. hud (*for* hus) P. strenede MIK; strende P. 173. ledene MKG;
 leedene P. 175. ic (*for* ich) P; *see* l. 174. 176. P *om.* of. 178. sel-
 couth P. 180. moste I; most SKT; moost G; P *om.* 185. herte
 (*for* art) P. 193. makynge KS; makynge ME; mankynde PG. 194.
 His (*for* Is) P. witt P.

Whi I suffre or nouȝt suffre · thi-self hast nouȝt to done; 368
 Amende thow it, if thow myȝte · for my tyme is to abyde.
 Suffraunce is a souereygne vertue · and a swyfte veniaunce.
 Who suffreth more than god?' quod he · 'no gome, as I leue!
 He miȝte amende in a minute-while · al that mys standeth, 372
 Ac he suffreth for somme mannes good · and so is owre bettre.

Holy writ,' quod that weye · 'wisseth men to suffre;

Propter deum subiecti estote omni creature.

Frenche men and fre men · affeyteth thus her childerne,
Bele vertue est soffrance · mal dire est petyl veniance, 376
Bien dire et bien soffrir · fait lui soffrant a bien venir.
 For-thi I rede,' quod Reson · 'rewle thi tonge bettere,
 And ar thow lakke eny lyf · loke if thow be to preyse!
 For is no creature vnder Criste · can formen hym-seluen; 380
 And if a man miȝte make · hym-self goed to the poeple,
 Vch a lif wold be lakles · leue thow non other!
 Ne thow schalt fynde but fewe · fayne for to here
 Of here defautes foule · by-for hem rehersed. 384

The wyse and the witty · wrote thus in the bible,

De re que te non molestat, noli certare.

For be a man faire or foule · it falleth nouȝte for to lakke
 The shappe ne the shafte · that god shope hym-selue;
 For al that he did was wel ydo · as holywrit witnesseth, 388

Et vidit deus cuncta que fecerat, et erant valde bona;

And badde euery creature · in his kynde encrees,
 Al to murthe with man · that most woo tholye
 In fondyng of the flesshe · and of the fende bothe.
 For man was made of suche a matere · he may nouȝt wel atert
 That ne some tymes hym bitit · to folwen his kynde; 393
 Catoun acordeth there-with · *nemo sine crimine viuit.*

Tho cauȝte I coloure anon · and comsed to ben aschamed,
 And awaked ther-with; · wo was me thanne 396

That I in meteles ne myȝte · more haue yknowen.

And thanne seyde I to my-self · and chidde that tyme;

'Now I wote what Dowel is,' quod I · 'by dere god, as me
 thinketh!'

And as I caste vp myn eyghen · one loked on me, and axed

B. 374-384. These 11 lines are in R only.

376. *pety* (for *petyl*) R.

379. *my* (for *eny*) R. 385. *noly* L.

Whi ich suffre other nat suffre : '—' 'certes,' ich seide, 197
 'Ech a seg for hym-self · Salamon ous techeth ;

De re que te non molestat, noli certare.'

'Ho suffreth more than god?' quath he · 'no gome, as ich leyue !
 He myght a-mende in a mynt-while · al that amys stondes ;
 Ac he suffreth, in ensauple · that we sholde alle suffren. 201

Ys no vertue so feyr · of value ne of profit,
 As ys suffrance souereynliche · so hit be for godes loue.
 And so witnesseth the wyse · and wysseth the Frenshe, 204

Bele uertue est suffraunce · mal dire est petite ueniaunce ;

Bien dire e bien souffrir · fait ly souffrable a bien uenir.

For-thi,' quath Reson, 'ich rede the · rewele thi tonge euere ;
 And er thow lakke eny lyf · loke ho is to preise. 208

For is no creature vnder Cryst · that can hym-selue make ;
 And yf Cristene creatures · couthen make hem-selue,
 Eche lede wolde be lacles · leyf thow non othere !

Man was mad of suche matere · he may nat wel a-sterre 212
 That som tymes hym tit · to folwen hus kynde ;
 Caton a-cordeth her-with · *nemo sine crimine uiuit.*

Tho cauhte ich colour a-non · and comsed to be ashamed,
 And awaked ther-with ; · wo was me thenne, 216
 That ich ne hadde ymet more · so murye as ich slepte,
 And sayde a-non to my-self · 'slepynge, ich hadde grace
 To wite what Dowel ys · ac wakyng neure !'

And thenne was ther a wizt · what he was ich nuste :— 220

C. 204. witnesseth P.
uenir IT ; *uener* PEG.

206. *suffrer* PTMEG ; *suffrier* I ; read *suffrir*.
 220. whizt P.

Of me, what thinge it were? · 'ywisse, sire,' I seide, 401
 'To se moche and suffre more · certes,' quod I, 'is Dowel!'
 'Haddestow suffred,' he seyde · 'slepyng tho thou were,
 Thou sholdest haue knowen that Clergye can · and conceiued
 more thorough Resoun; 404
 For Resoun wolde haue reherced the · rizte as Clergye saide,
 Ac for thine entermetyng · here artow forsake;

Philosophus esses, si lacuisses.

Adam, while he spak nouzt · had paradys at wille, 407
 Ac whan he mameled aboute mete · and entermeted to knowe
 The wisdom and the witte of god · he was put fram blisse;
 And rizt so ferde Resoun bi the; · thou with rude speche
 Lakkedest, and losedest thinge · that longed nouzt to be done;
 Tho hadde he no lykyng · forto lere the more. 412

Pruide now and presumpcioun · per-aventure, wole the appele,
 That Clergye thi compaignye · ne kepeth nouzt to sue.
 Shal neuere chalangynge ne chydyng · chaste a man so sone
 As shal Shame, and shenden hym · and shape hym to amende.
 For lat a dronken daffe · in a dyke falle, 417
 Late hym ligge, loke nouzte on hym · til hym lest to ryse;
 For though Resoun rebuked hym thanne · reccheth he neuere,
 Of clergie ne of his conseil · he counteth nouzt a rusche; 420
 To blame or for to bete hym thanne · it were but pure synne.
 Ac whan Nede nymeth hym vp · for doute lest he sterue,
 And Shame shrapeth his clothes · and his shynes wassheth,
 Thanne wote the dronken daffe · wherfore he is to blame.'

'3e seggen soth,' quod I · 'ich haue yseyne it ofte, 425
 There smit no thinge so smerte · ne smelleth so soure,
 As Shame, there he sheweth him · for euery man hym shonyeth!
 Why 3e wisse me thus,' quod I · 'was for I rebuked Resoun.'

'Certes,' quod he, 'that is soth' · and shope hym for to
 walken; 429
 And I aros vp rizt with that · and folwed hym after,
 And preyed hym of his curteisye · to telle me his name.

B. 407. whhiles L. 419-421. reccheth—hym thanne *in R only*. R has
 reccheth hym (*for reccheth he*), and omits To blame. 426. smitte L.

'What ys Dowel?' quath that wîzt · 'y-wys, syre,' ich seyde,
'To see muche and suffren al · certes, syre, ys Dowel.'

'Haddest thou suffred,' he seide · 'slepyng tho thou were,
Thow sholdest haue knowe that Cleregye can · and more conceyued thorwe Reson. 224

For Reson wolde haue reherced to the · ryght as Cleregie seide;
Ac for thyn entermetyng · her art thou for-sake:

Philosophus fuisses, si lacuisses; et alibi: Locutum me aliquando penituit, lacuisse nunquam.

Adam, whiles he spak nat · hadde paradys at wylle; 227
Ac whanne he mamelede a-boute mete · and musede for to knowe
The wisdom and the wit of god · he was putte out of blisse.
Ryght so ferde Reson by the · for thi rude speche,
And for thou woldest wyte why · of Resones pryuate.

For pruyde and presompcion · of thy parfit lyuyng 232
Reson refusede the · and wolde nat reste with the,
Ne Cleregie of hus connyng · kepeth the nat shewe.
For shal neuere, er shame come · a shrewe wel be chasted.
For let a dronken daffe · in a diche falle, 236
Let hym lygge, lok nat on hym · til hym luste aryse;
And thauh Reson rebuke hym thenne · reccheth he neuere,
Of clergie ne of kynde witt · counteth he nat a russhe:
To blame hym other to bete hym thenne · ich halde hit bote synne. 240

Ac when Neede nymeth hym vp · a-non he ys a-shamed,
And thenne wot he wher-fore · and whi he is to blame.'

'3e seggeth soth, by my soule,' quath ich · 'ich haue seyen hit ofte,

Ther smyt no thyng so smerte · ne smelleth so foule 244
As Shame; ther he sheweth hym · ech man shoneth hus companye.

Whi 3e worden to me thus · was for ich aresonede Reson.'

'3e, certes,' quath he, 'that is soth' · and shop hym to walke;
And ich a-roos vp ryght with that · and reuerencede hym fayre,
And yf hus wil were · he wolde hus name telle? 249

Hic explicit passus quartus de Dowel.

C. 223. suffrede P. 226. ert (*for art*) PE. 227. att P. 229. witt P. 237.
Let MKST; Leet P. on IKMST; in PE. 238. rebuke IKMST; rebuky P.
241. a-shamede P. 244. Ther IMKST; Her PE. 248. ryght vp P.

PASSUS XII.

Passus duodecimus.

‘ I AM Ymagynatyf,’ quod he · ‘ idel was I neuere,
 Thouȝe I sitte bi my-self · in sikenesse ne in helthe.
 I haue folwed the in feithe · this fyue and fourty wyntre,
 And many tymes haue moeued the · to thinke on thine ende, 4
 And how fele fernȝeres are faren · and so fewe to come,
 And of thi wylde wantounesse · tho thouȝe were,
 To amende it in thi myddel age · lest miȝte the faylled
 In thyne olde elde · that yuel can suffre 8
 Pouerte or penaunce · or preyeres bidde ;

Si non in prima vigilia, nec in secunda, etc.

Amende the while thouȝe miȝte · thouȝe hast ben warned ofte
 With poustees of pestilences · with pouerte and with angres ;
 And with thiȝe bitter baleyses · god beteth his dere childeren,

Quem diligo, castigo.

And Daud in the sauter seith · of suche that loueth Iesus, 13

“ Virga tua et baculus tuus, ipsa me consolata sunt, &c.

Al-though thouȝe stryke me with thi staffe · with stikke or with ȝerde,
 It is but murth as for me · to amende my soule.”

And thouȝe medlest the with makyngeȝ · and miȝtest go sey thi
 sauter, 16

And bidde for hem that ȝiueth the bred ; · for there ar bokes ynowe
 To telle men what Dowel is · Dobet, and Dobet bothe,
 And prechoures to preue what it is · of many a peyre freres.’

I seigh wel he sayde me soth · and, somewhat me to excuse, 20
 Seide, ‘ Catoun confortd his sone · that, clerke though he were,
 To solacen hym sum tyme · as I do whan I make ;

Interpone tuis interdum gaudia curis, etc.

And of holy men I herde,’ quod I · ‘ how thei other-while 24
 Pleyden, the parfiter to be · in many places.

Ac if there were any wight · that wolde me telle
 What were Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest atte laste,
 Wolde I neuere do werke · but wende to holicherche, 28
 And there bydde my bedes · but whan ich eet or slepe.’

PASSUS XV.

Incipit passus quintus de Dowel.

' I CH am Ymaginatif,' quath he · 'ydel was ich neuere,
 Thauh ich sitte by my-self · suche is my grace ;
 Ich haue yfolwed the in faith · more than fourty wynter,
 And wissede the ful ofte · what Dowel was to mene, 4
 And counsailede the for Cristes sake · no creature to by-gyle,
 Nother to lye nother to lacke · ne lere that is defendid,
 Ne to spille speche · as to speke an ydel,
 And no tyme to tyne · ne trewe thyng to teenen; 8
 Lowe the to lyue forth · in the lawe of holychurche ;
 Thenne dost thou wel, with-oute drede · ho can do bet, no forse !
 Clerkes that connen al · ich hope thei conne do bettere ;
 Ac hit suffiseth to be saued · and to be suche as ich tauhte. 12
 Ac for to louye and lene · and lyue wel and by-leyue,
 Ys ycallid *Caritas* · Kynde Loue in English ;
 And that is Dobet, yf eny suche be · a blessed man, that helpeth
 That pees be and pacience · and poure with-oute defaute; 16
Beatius est dare quam petere.

C. 2. ich sitt E; i sitte MT; ysete P. 3. yfolwede P. 5. counsailede P.
 8. tyne EMIKTS; tene P. trywe P. 10. bett P. 13. an (*for and*
 and) P. 14. ycalid P. 16. That IMKST; And PE.

'Poule in his pistle,' quod he · 'preueth what is dowel; 30

Fides, spes, caritas; et maior horum, etc.

Feith, hope, and charitee · and alle ben good,
And sauen men sundry tymes · ac none so sone as charite. 32
For he doth wel with-oute doute · that doth as lewte techeth;
That is, if thow be man married · thi make thow louye,
And lyue forth as lawe wole · while 3e lyuen bothe.

Riht so, if thow be religious · renne thow neuere ferther 36
To Rome ne to Rochemadore · but as thi reule techeth,
And holde the vnder obedyence · that heigh wey is to heuene.

And if thow be mayden to marye · and mizte wel contynue,
Seke thow neuere seynt forther · for no soule helthe. 40

For what made Lucyfer · to lese the heigh heuene,
Or Salamon his sapience · or Sampson his strengthe?
Iob the Iewe his ioye · dere he it abouzte,
Arestotle and other mo · Ypocras, & Virgyle; 44

Alisaundre that al wan · elengelich ended.
Catel and kynde witte · was combraunce to hem alle.
Felyce hir fayrnesse · fel hir al to sklaundre;
And Rosamounde riht so · reufully bysette, 48

The bewte of hir body · in badnesse she dispended.
Of many suche I may rede · of men and of wommen,
That wyse wordes wolde shewe · and worche the contrarye,
Sunt homines nequam bene de virtute loquentes. 52

And riche renkes riht so · gaderen and sparen,
And tho men that thei moste haten · mynistren it atte laste;
And, for thei suffren & se · so many nedy folkes,
And loue hem nouzt as owre lorde byt · lesen her soules;

Date et dabitur vobis, etc.

So catel and kende wit · acombreth ful many; 57
Wo is hym that hem weldeth · but if he hem wel despende;

Scientes et non facientes varijs flagellis vapulabunt;

Sapience, seith the boke · swelleth a mannes soule,

Sapiencia inflat, etc.;

And ricchesse riht so · but if the rote be trewe; 60
Ac grace is a grasse ther-of · tho greuaunces to abate.
Ac grace ne groweth nouzte · but amonges lowe;
Pacience and pouerte · the place is there it groweth,

Ac catel and kynde witt · encombreth ful menye;
 Woo is hym that hem weldeth · bote he hem wel dispeyne;

Scientes et non facientes uariis flagellis uapulabunt.

Ac comunliche connyng · and vnkynde rychesse,
 As, loreles to be lordes · and lewede men techeres, 20
 And holy churche horen help · auerous and coueytous,
 Droweth vp Dowel · and distruyeth Dobest.

Ac grace is a gras ther-fore · to don hem eft growe;
 Ac grace groweth nat · til goode wil gynne reyne, 24
 And wokie thorwe good werkes · wikkede hertes.

C. 18. hym (*for* hem) PE.
 wille S; god wol Pl.

24. goode wil K; goode wille E; goud

And in lele-lyuyng men · and in lyf-holy, 64
 And thorough the gyfte of the holygoste · as the gospel telleth,
Spiritus ubi vult spirat, etc.

Clergye and Kynde Witte · comth of sizte and techynge,
 As the boke bereth witnesse · to buirnes that can rede,
Quod scimus, loquimur; quod vidimus, testamur.

Of *quod scimus* cometh clergye · and connyng of heuene, 68
 And of *quod vidimus* cometh kynde witte · of sizte of dyuerse
 peple.

Ac grace is a gyfte of god · and of gret loue spryngeth;
 Knewe neuere clerke how it cometh forth · ne kynde witte the
 weyes,

Nescit aliquis unde venit, aut quo vadit, etc.

Ac ȝit is clergye to comende · and kynde witte bothe, 72
 And namely clergye, for Crystes loue · that of clergye is rote.
 For Moyses witnesseth that god wrote · for to wisse the peple,
 In the olde lawe, as the lettre telleth · that was the lawe of Iewes,
 That what woman were in auoutrie taken · were she riche or pore,
 With stones men shulde hir stryke · and stone hir to deth. 77
 A womman, as we fynden · was gulty of that dede,
 Ac cryste of his curteisye · thorw clergye hir saued;
 For thorw carectus that Cryst wrot · the Iewes knewe hemseluen
 Gultier as afor god · and gretter in synne
 Than the woman that there was · and wenten away for schame.
 The clergye that there was · confortd the womman.
 Holykirke knoweth this · that Crystes writyng saued; 84
 So clergye is conforte · to creatures that repenten,
 And to mansed men · myschief at her ende.

For goddes body myȝte nouȝte be · of bred, withouten clergye,
 The which body is bothe · bote to the riȝtful, 88
 And deth and dampnacioun · to hem that dyeth yuel.
 As Crystes carecte confortd and bothe · coupable shewed
 The womman that the Iewes brouȝte · that Iesus thouȝte to saue;
Nolite iudicare, et non iudicabimini, etc.

Riȝt so goddes body, bretheren · but it be worthily taken, 92
 Dampneth vs atte daye of dome · as the carectes dede the iewes.
 For-thi I conseilte the for Cristes sake · Clergye that thow louye,
 For Kynde Witte is of his kyn · and neighe cosynes bothe

Ac er suche a wil wexe · god hym-self worcheth,
And sent forth seint espirit · to don loue sprynge ;

Spiritus ubi uult spirat, et cetera.

So grace, with-oute grace · of god and of good werkes, 28
May nat bee, bee thow siker · thauh we bidde euere.
Clergie cometh bote of siht · and kynde witt of sterres,
As to be bore other bygete · in suche constellacion,
That wit wexeth ther-of · and othere wyrdes bothe ; 32

Uultus huius seculi sunt subiecti uultibus celestibus.

So grace is a gyfte of god · and kynde witt a chaunce,
And cleregye and connyng · of kynde wittes techynge.

And 3ut is clergie to comende · for Cristes loue, more
Than eny connyng of kynde witt · bote clergie hit ruwele. 36
For Moyse wittnesseth that god wrot · in stoon with hus fynger,
Lawe of loue oure lorde wrot · longe er Crist were.

And Crist cam and confermede · and holy kirke made,
And in sond a sygne wrot · and seide to the Iewes, 40
'That seeth hym-self synneles · cesse nat, ich hote,
To stryke with stoon other with staf · this strompet to dethe ;'
Qui uestrum sine peccato est mittat in eam lapidem, & cetera.

For-thi ich consaile alle Cristene · clergie to honoure ;

C. 26. wil MKST ; will wol P. 27. sent EKST ; send PM. 32.
wyrdus S ; wirdes K ; wordes (*bailly*) PEIT (*wyrdes* = destinies). 35. fore
P. 39. kirke I ; churche PEFS. 42. strompett P. *mittat—lapidem* in
E only. 43. consaily P ; see l. 64.

To owre lorde, leue me; · for-thi loue hem, I rede; 96
 For bothe ben as miroures · to amenden owre defautes,
 And lederes for lewed men · and for lettred bothe.

For-thi lakke thow neuere logyke · lawe, ne his custumes,
 Ne countreplede clerkes · I conseil the for eure. 100
 For as a man may nouzt se · that mysseth his eyghen,
 Namore can no klerke · but if he cauzt it first thorough bokes.
 Al-though men made bokes · god was the maistre,
 And seynt spirit the saumplarye · and seide what men sholde
 write. 104

And rízt as syzte serueth a man · to se the heighe strete,
 Rízt so ledeth letterure · lewed men to resoun.
 And as a blynde man in bataille · bereth wepne to fízte,
 And hath none happ with his axe · his enemye to hitte, 108
 Namore kan a kynde-witted man · but clerkes hym teche,
 Come for al his kynde witte · to Crystendome and be saued;
 Whiche is the coffre of Crystes tresore · and clerkes kepe the
 keyes,

To vnlouken it at her lykyng · and to the lewed peple 112
 ȝyue mercy for her mysdedes · if men it wole aske
 Buxomelich and benygneliche · and bidden it of grace.

Archa-dei in the olde lawe · Leuites it kepten;
 Hadde neuere lewed man leue · to leggen honde on that chest,
 But he were preste or prestes sone · patriarke or prophete.

Saul, for he sacrificed · sorwe hym be-tydde,
 And his sones al-so · for that synne myscheued,
 And many mo other men · that were no Leuites, 120
 That with *archa-dei* ȝeden · in reuerence and in worchippe,
 And leyden honde ther-on to liften it vp · and loren hir lif after.
 For-thi I conseil alle creatures · no clergie to dispise,
 Ne sette schort be here science · what so thei don hemselue. 124
 Take we her wordes at worthe · for here witnesse be trewe,
 And medle we nauzt muche with hem · to meuen any wrathe,
 Lest cheste chafen vs · to choppe vche man other;

Nolite tangere christos meos, etc.

For Clergye is kepere · vnder Cryst of heuene; 128
 Was there neuere no knyzte · but Clergye hym made.

B. 118-127. *These lines in R only and in C-text.*
 ne medle we R. 127. chasen R; see C-text.

126. medele we M;

For as a man may nat seo · that mysseth hus eyen, 44
 No more can no clerkes · bote if hit be of bookes.
 And thauh men maden bokes · god was here maister,
 And seynte spirit the saumplarie · and seide what men sholde
 wryte.

And ryght as syht serueth a man · to see the hye strete, 48
 Ryght so lereth lettrure · lewede men to reson.
 And as a blynde man in batayle · bereth wepne to fyghte,
 And hath non hap with hus axe · hus enemy to hitte;
 No more can a kynde-witted man · bote clerkes hym teche, 52
 Come for alle hus kynde wyttes · thorwe Cristendom to be saued;
 The whiche is cofre of Cristes tresour · and clerkes kepen the
 keyes,

To vnlouke hit at here lykyng · the lewede and lerede to helpe,
 To ȝeue mercy for mysdedes · yf men wolde hit aske 56
 Buxumliche and benygneliche · and bydden hit of grace.

Archadei in the olde lawe · Leuites hit kepten;
 Hadde neuere lewede man leue · to legge honde on that cheste,
 Bote hit were preeste other preestes sone · patriarck other prophete.

Saul, for he sacrificede · sorwe hym by-tydde, 61
 And hus sones for hus synnes · sorwe they hadden;
 And alle lewede that leyde hond theron · loren lyf after.
 For-thy ich consaille alle creatures · no clerk to dispise, 64
 Ne sette short by here science · what so thei don hemselue.
 Take we here wordes a worth · for here wittnesses ben trewe,
 And medle we nat moche with hem · to meeu eny wratthe,
 Leste cheste chaufe ous so · and choppe ech man othere; 68
 And do we as Daud techeth · for doute of godes veniaunce;

Nolite tangere Cristos meos, &c.

For Clergie is Cristes vikery · to conforte and to curen;
 Bothe lered and lewed were lost · yf clergie ne were.

C. 45. if IKG; ȝif EMT; P *om.* 53. sauede P. 59. on IMKT:
 in PES. 60. preestes PEIST; prest MK. 63. *From* IKT; *not in* P.
 66. trywe P.

Ac Kynde Witte cometh · of alkynnes siztes,
Of bryddes and of bestes · of tastes of treuthe, and of deceytes.

Lyueres to-forn vs · vseden to marke 132
The selkouthes that thei seighen · her sones for to teche,

And helden it an heighe science · her wittes to knowe.
Ac thorough her science sothely · was neuere no soule ysaued,
Ne brouzte by her bokes · to blisse ne to ioye; 136
For alle her kynde knowynges · come but of dyuerse sightes.

Patriarkes and prophetes · repreued her science,
And seiden, her wordes ne her wisdomes · was but a folye;
As to the clergye of Cryst · counted it but a trifle; 140

Sapiencia huius mundi, stulticia est apud deum.

For the heihe holigoste · heuene shal to-cleue,
(And loue shal lepe out after · in-to this lowe erthe,
(And clennesses shal cacchen it · and clerkes shullen it fynde;
Pastores loquebantur ad inuicem.

He speketh there of riche men ryzt nouzt · ne of ryzt witty,
Ne of lordes that were lewed men · but of the hexte lettred oute,
Ibant magi ab oriente, etc.

If any frere were founde there · ich ȝif the fyue shillynges;
Ne in none beggares cote · was that barne borne,
But in a burgeys place · of Bethlem the best; 148
*Set non erat locus cis in diuersorio; et pauper non habet
diuersorium.*

To pastours and to poetes · appiered that aungel,
And bad hem go to Bethlem · goddis burth to honoure,
And songe a songe of solas · *gloria in excelsis deo!*
Riche men rutte tho · and in here reste were, 152
Tho it schon to the schepherdes · a schewer of blisse.

Clerkes knewe it wel · and comen with here presentz,
And deden her homage honourablely · to hym that was almyȝty.
Why I haue tolde the al this— · I toke ful gode hede 156
How thow contraryedest Clergye · with crabbed wordes,
“How that lewed men liztloker · than lettred were saued,

B. 139. was R; nas LWCROB; but observe the alliteration. 140. est
WCB; LRO om. 148. cis from the Vulgate; LCOB om. 152, 153.
These lines in R only; and in C-text. 153. þe M; R om. 156.
þe CRB; LW om.

Kynde-wittede men han · a cleregie by hem-selue ; 72
 Of cloudes and of custumes · thei contreuede meny thynges,
 And markede hit in here manere · and mused ther-on to knowe.
 And of the selcouthes that thei seyen · here sones ther-of thei
 tauhte,

Thei helden hit for an hey science · here soteltes to knowe. 76
 Ac thorw here science sothliche · was neuere soule ysaued,
 Ne brouht thorwe here bokes · to blisse ne to ioye.
 For al here kynde knowyng · cam bote of diuerse sightes
 Of briddes and of bestes · of blisse and of sorwe. 80

Patriarkes and prophetes · reprouede here science,
 And seide here wordes and here wysdomes · ne was bote al
 folye ;

As to the cleregie of Cryst · thei countede hit bote a trufle ;

Sapientia huius mundi stultitia est apud deum.

For the hye holygost · shall heuene to-cleue, 84
 And loue shal leepe out after · in-to this lowe erthe,
 And clannesse shal cacchen hit · and clerkes shullen hit fynde ;

Pastores loquebantur ad inuicem, et cel.

Hit speketh of riche men ryght nouht · ne of riche-lordes,
 Bote of clennessse and of clerkes · and kepers of bestes ; 88

Ibant magi ab oriente, et cetera.

Yf eny frere were founde there · ich zeue the fyue shyllinges!
 Nother in cote nother in caytyf hous · was Crist y-bore,
 Bote in a burgeises hous · the beste of alle the toun.

To pastours and to poetes · aperede the angel, 92
 And bad hem go to Bedlehem · godes burthe to honoure,
 And songen a song of solas · *Gloria in excelsis deo!*
 Riche men routten tho · and in here reste were,
 Tho hit shon to the shepehurdes · a shewere of blisse. 96
 Clerkes knewen the comete · and comen with here presentes,
 And dude here homage honorably · to hym that was almyghty.
 Whi ich haue ytold the al this · ich took ful good hede,
 How thow contrariedest Cleregie · with crabbede wordes, 100
 That is, how lewede men and luthere · lyghtloker were saued

C. 75. selcouthes MEKSTG ; selcouthe P. 79. PE insert ne before cam.
 80. PE om. and of. 89. PE om. the. 91. songen M ; songe IT ; syngen
 PEK. 101. lyghlokere P (sic). sauede P.

Than clerkes or kynde-witted men · of Crystene peple."

And thow seidest soth of somme · ac se in what manere:—160

Take two stronge men · and in Themese caste hem,
And bothe naked as a nedle · her none sykerer than other,
That one hath connyng · and can swymmen and dyuen,
That other is lewed of that laboure · lerned neuere swymme;
Which trowestow of tho two · in Themese is in moste drede?

He that neuere ne dyued · ne nouzt can of swymmynge,
Or the swymmere that is sauf · bi so hym-self lyke,
There his felaw flet forth · as the flode lyketh, 168
And is in drede to drenche · that neuere dede swymme?

'That swymme can nouzt,' I seide · 'it seemeth to my wittes.'

'Rizt so,' quod the renke · 'resoun it sheweth,
That he that knoweth clergye · can sonner aryse 172
Out of synne and be sauf · though he synne ofte,
If hym lyketh and lest · than any lewed lelly.

For if the clerke be konnyng · he knoweth what is synne,
And how contricioun with-oute confessioun conforteth the soule,
As thow seest in the sauter · in psalme one or tweyne, 177
How contricioun is commended · for it caccheth away synne;

*Beati quorum remisse sunt iniquitates, et quorum tecta sunt
peccata, etc.*

And this conforteth vch a clerke · and keuereth hym fram wanhope,
In which flode the fende · fondeth a man hardest; 180
There the lewed lith stille · and loketh after lente,
And hath no contricioun ar he come to shryfte · and thanne can
he litel telle,

And as his lores-man leres hym · bileueth and troweth;
And that is after person or parisch prest · and, paraenture bothe
Vnconnyng to lere lewed men · as Luk bereth witnesse, 185

Dum cecus ducit cecum, ambo in foueam cadunt.

Wo was hym marked · that wade mote with the lewed!
Wel may the barne blisse · that hym to boke sette;
That lyuyng after letterure · saued hym lyf and soule! 188

Dominus pars hereditatis mee · is a meri verset,
That has take fro Tybourne · twenti stronge theues;
There lewed theues ben lolled vp · loke how thei be saued!

B. 162. syker L; sikerer WCOB.
bothe R; LWCB om.; cf. C-text.
cadunt I have supplied.

178. *peccata* in R only. 184.
185. *ambo in foueam* in OC₂ only;

Than connynge clerkes · of kynde vnderstondyng ;
 And thow seidest soth of somme · ac ich seye in what manere.
 Take two stronge men · and in Temese cast hem, 104
 And bothe naked as a nelde · here nother heuyour than other ;
 That on hath connynge · and can swimmen and dyuen,
 That other is lewede of that labour · and lernede neuere swymme ;
 Which is, trowest thou, of tho two · in Temese most in drede ?'

'He that can nat swymme,' ich seyde · 'hit semeth to alle
 wittes.' 109

'Ryght so,' quath that renke · 'reson hit sheweth,
 That he that knoweth cleregie · can sonnere a-ryse
 Out of synne, and be saf · thow he synegy ofte, 112
 If hym lyketh and lust · than eny lewede sothliche.
 For yf the clerk be connynge · and knoweth what is synne,
 And hou contricion with-oute confession · conforteth the soule,
 As we seen in the sauter · in psalmes on other tweye, 116
 How contricion is comended · for hit caccheth a-wey synne,

*Beati quorum remisse sunt iniquitates, et quorum lecta sunt
 peccata, &c. :*

And that comforteth ech a clerk · and keuereth fro wanhope,
 In whiche flood the feend · fondeth man hardest,
 Ther the lewede lyeth stille · and loketh after lente, 120
 And hath no contricion · ar he come to shryfte ;
 And than can he lytel telle · of on other of other,
 Bote as his loresman lereth hym · he by-leyueth and troweth ;
 And that is after person other pareshe-preest · and paraunter
 bothe beth lewede 124

For to lere lewede men · as Luc bereth wittnesse ;

Si cecus ducit cecum, ambo in foueam cadent :

For mucche woo was hym marked · that wade shal with the
 lewede.

Wel may the barn blesse · that hym to book sette ;
 That lyuyng after lettrure · sauede hym lyf and soule ! 128
Dominus pars hereditatis mee · ys a murye verset,
 Hit hath ytake fro Tyborne · twenty stronge theeues ;
 Ther lewede theeues ben lollid vp · loke how thei been sauede !

C. 104. two STG ; to PEMK. 108. two STK ; to PEM. 117. cac-
 cheth MIKSG ; chacheth P. et—peccata E. 118. a IKST ; PEMG om.
 koeuereþ P. 129. versett P.

The thef that had grace of god · on Gode Fryday as thow speke,
Was, for he ȝelte hym creaunt to Cryst on the crosse · and knew-
leched hym gulty, 193

And grace axed of god · that to graunten it is redy
To hem that boxomeliche biddeth it · and ben in wille to
amenden hem.

Ac though that thef had heuene · he hadde none heigh blisse,
As seynt Iohan and other seyntes · that asserved hadde bettere.
Riȝt as sum man ȝeue me mete · and sette me amydde the flore,
Ich haue mete more than ynough · ac nouȝt so moche worship
As tho that seten atte syde-table · or with the souereignes of
the halle, 200

But sitte as a begger bordelees · bi my-self on the grounde.
So it fareth bi that feloun · that a Gode Fryday was saued;
He sit neiȝher with seynt Iohan · Symonde, ne Iude,
Ne wyth maydenes ne with martires · confessoires ne wydwes,
But by hym-self as a soleyne · and serued on the erthe. 203
For he that is ones a thef · is euermore in daungere,
And as lawe lyketh · to lyue or to deye;

De peccato propiciato, noli esse sine metu.

And forto seruen a seynt · and such a thef togyderes, 208
It were noȝther resoun ne riȝt · to rewarde hem bothe aliche.

And riȝt as *Troianus* the trewe knyȝt · tilde nouȝt depe in
helle,

That owre lorde ne had hym liztlich oute · so leue I the thef be
in heuene. 211

For he is in the lowest of heuene · if owre bileue be trewe,
And wel loselyche he lolleth there · by the lawe of holy-cherche,

Quia reddit unicuique iuxta opera sua, etc.

And why that one thef on the crosse · creaunt hym ȝelt
Rather than that other thef · though thow wolde appose, 215
Alle the clerkes vnder Cryst · ne couthe the skil assoille;

Quare placuit, quia voluit.

And so I sey by the · that sekest after the whyes,
And aresonedest Resoun · a rebukyng as it were, 218

B. 194. pat—is from W; and he is euer LCOB. 195. To hem from W.
LCROB om. 197. In margin of L—in domo meo multe sunt mantiones.
203. sit WC; sitte L.

The thief that hadde grace of god · a Goode Fryday, as thow
toldest, 132

Was, for he ȝelde hym creaunt to Crist · and hus grace askede.
And god is ay gracious · to alle that gredeth to hym,
He wol no wickede man be lost · bote yf he wol hym-self;

Nolo mortem peccatoris, sed ut magis conuertatur et uiuat.

And thauh the thief hadde heuene · he hadde non hye blisse
As seynt Iohan and other seyntes · that han a-serued bettere.
Ryght as som man ȝyueth me mete · and set me a-mydde the
floor, 138

Ich haue mete more than ynowe · ac nat with so muche worshup
As tho that sytten at the syd-table · other with the souercyns
in halle, 140

Bote, as a beggere, bordles · by my-self vpon the grounde.
So hit ferde by the felon · that a Goode Fryday was saued;
He sit nother with seynt Iohan · with Symon ne with Iude,
Ne with maydenes ne with martris · ne with mylde wydewes,
Bote as a soleyn by hym-self · and serued vp-on the grounde..
For he that ys ones a thief · is euere-more in daunger, 146
And as the lawe lyketh · to lyue other to deye,

De peccato propiciato noli esse sine metu;

And for to seruen a seynt · and suche a thief to-gederes,
Hit were no reson ne ryght · to rewarde bothe yliche.

Ryȝt as *Traianus*, the trewe knyght · tulde nat deep in helle,
That oure lord ne hadde hym lyghtliche out · so leyueh of the
thief in heuene.

For he ys in the lowest heuene · yf oure byleyue beo trewe, 152
And wel loseliche lolleth there · as by the lawe of holy-churche;

Et reddet unicuique secundum opera sua.

Ac whi that one thief vp-on the croys · creaunt hym ȝelde
Rather than that other · thauh thou woldest apose,
Alle the clerkes vnder Crist · ne couthe thys asoile; 156

Quare placuit, quia noluit, etc.

And so ich seye by the · that sekest after weyes,
How creatures han kynde witt · and clerkes comen to bokes,

C. 133. ȝelde EIKG; ȝald T; ȝuld P. hem (for hym) P. 137. a-seruede P.
138. sett P. 142. sauede P. 143. sit IMKSTG; sat P. 145. seruede P.
149. yliche IKSEG; liche P. 150, 152. trywe P. 153. loseliche K;
losliche P; louslich E; loslich S; lifliche I; loueliche MT. reddet EIKMST;
reddit P. 154. one I; o T; PEMSKG om. 158. han IKG; and PEMS.

And of the floures in the fryth · and of her feire hewes,
 Where-of thei cacche her coloures · so clere and so brizte, 220
 And willest of briddes and of bestes · and of hire bredyng to
 knowe,

Why somme be alowe and somme alofte · thi lykyng it were,
 And of the stones and of the sterres · thow studyest, as I leue,
 How euere beste or brydde · hath so breme wittes: 224
 Clergye ne kynde witte · ne knewe neuere the cause,
 Ac Kynde knoweth the cause hym-selue · and no creature elles.
 He is the pyes patroun · and putteth it in hire ere,
 That there the thorne is thickest · to buylden and brede;
 And Kynde kenned the pecok · to cauken in swich a kynde,
 And kenned Adam · to knowe his pryue membres, 230
 And tauzte hym and Eue · to hylien hem with leues.

Lewed men many tymes · maistres thei apposen,
 Why Adam ne hiled nouzte firste · his mouth that eet the apple,
 Rather than his lykam a-low · lewed axen thus clerkes; 234
 Kynde knoweth whi he dede so · ac no clerke elles.
 Ac of briddes and of bestes · men by olde tyme
 Ensamples token and termes · as telleth this poetes,
 And that the fairest foule · foulest engendreth, 238
 And feblest foule of flyght is · that fleegheth or swymmeth;
 And that is the pekok and the pohenne · proude riche men thei
 bitokneth, 240
 For the pekok, and men pursue hym · may nouzte fleighe heighe;
 For the trailyng of his taille · ouertaken is he sone,
 And his flesshe is foule flesshe · and his feet bothe,
 And vnlouelich of ledene · and laith for to here. 244

Rizt so the riche · if he his ricchesse kepe,
 And deleth it nouzt tyl his deth-day · the taille of al sorwe.
 Rizt as the pennes of the pecok · peyneth hym in his flizte,
 So is possessioun payne · of pens and of nobles 248
 To alle hem that it holdeth · til her taille be plukked.
 And though the riche repente thanne · and birewe the tyme,
 That euere he gadered so grete · and gaf there of so litel,
 Though he crye to Cryst thanne · with kene wille, I leue 252
 His ledne be in owre lordes ere · lyke a pyes chiteryng.

B. 226. and WCOB; LR *om.* 247. peyneth WOB; payned LR. 253.
 chiteryng W; LCROB *om.*

And how the floures in the fritth · cometh to feyre hewes ;
 Was neuere creature vnder Cryst · that knew wel the bygynnyng
 Bote Kynde, that contreeuede hit furst · of corteise wil. 161

He tauhte the tortle to trede · the pokok to cauke,
 And Adam and Eue · and other bestes alle
 A cantel of kynde witt · here kynde to saue. 164
 Of good and of wikke · Kynde was the ferste,
 He seih hit and suffrede hit · and seide hit bee sholde ;

Quia ipse dixit, et facta sunt ; ipse mandauit, et creata sunt.

Ac whi he wolde that wikkede were · ich wene and ich leyue,
 Was neuere man vpon molde · that myghte hit aspye. 168

Ac longe-lybbynge men · lyknede mennes lyuyng
 To bryddes and to bestes · as here bokes telleth,
 That the fayrest fowel · foulest engendreth,
 And feblest fowel of flicht is · that fleeth othere swymmeth. 172
 That is, the pokok and the popeiay · with here proude federes
 By-tokneth ryght riche men · that regnen here on erthe.
 For porsewe a pocok · other a pohen to cacche,
 And haue hem in haste · at thyn owene wil ; 176
 For thei may nat fleo fer · ne ful hye nother,
 For here fetheres that faire ben · to fle fer hem letteth.
 Hus leedene is vnloueliche · and lothliche hus caroigne ;
 Ac for hus peyntede pennes · the pocok is honoured 180
 More than for hus faire flesh · other for hus murye note.
 Ryght so men reuerenceth more the ryche · for hus muche meeble
 Than for the kyn that he cam of · other for hus kynde wittes.
 Thus the poete preiseth · the pocok for hus federes, 184
 And the riche for hus rentes · othere rychesse in hus schoppe.

C. 161. corteise ES ; cortese K ; curteis MI ; korteis G ; cortesie P. 172.
 fleeth IM ; fletth ET ; flucht P. 173. pookoc P ; pecok KTG. withe P.
 177. fer IMSTG ; fur P. 178. fer IMSTG ; feer P. 180. pennes IT ;
 fetheres PEMSKG (*badly*). his honourede P. 183. fore (*for and for*) P.
 185. fore P. schoppe EMKSG ; sheepe P.

And whan his caroigne shal come · in caue to be buried,
 I leue it flaumbe ful foule · the folde al aboute, 255
 And alle the other ther it lyth · enuenymeth thorgh his attere.
 By the po feet is vnderstonde · as I haue lerned in Auynete,
 Excecutoures, fals frendes · that fulfille nouzt his wille
 That was writen, and thei witnesse · to worche rízt as it wolde.
 Thus the poete preues that the pecok · for his fetheres is
 reuerenced, 260

Rízt so is the riche · bi resoun of his godis.

The larke, that is a lasse foule · is more louelich of ledne,
 And wel away of wenge · swifter than the pecok,
 And of flesch, by fele folde · fatter and swetter. 264
 To lowe-lybbyng men · the larke is resembled;
 Arestotle the grete clerke · suche tales he telleth;
 Thus he lyketh in his logyk · the leste foule oute.
 And where he be sauf or nouzt sauf · the sothe wote no clergie,
 Ne of Sortes ne of Salamon · no scripture can telle. 269
 Ac god is so good, I hope · that sitth he gaf hem wittis
 To wissen vs weyes there-with · (that wissen vs to be saued,
 And the better for her bokes) · to bidden we ben holden, 272
 That god for his grace · gyue her soules reste;
 For lettred men were lewed men 3ut · ne were lore of her bokes.'

'Alle thise clerkes,' quod I tho · 'that on Cryst leuen,
 Seggen in her sarmones · that noyther Sarasenes ne Iewes,
 Ne no creature of Cristes lyknesse · with-uten Crystendome
 worth saued.' 277

'*Contra*,' quod Ymagynatyf tho · and comsed for to loure,
 And seyde, '*saluabitur vix iustus in die iudicij*.
Ergo saluabitur,' quod he · and seyde namore Latyne.
 'Troianus was a trewe knyzte · and toke neuere Cristendome,
 And he is sauf, so seith the boke · and his soule in heuene.
 For there is fullyng of fonte · and fullyng in blode-shedyng, 282
 And thorough fuire is fullyng · and that is ferme bileue;

Aduenit ignis diuinus, non comburens, sed illuminans, etc.

Ac trewth that trespassed neuere · ne transuersed azeines his
 lawe, 284
 But lyueth as his lawe techeth · and leueth there be no bettere,
 And if there were, he wolde amende · and in suche wille deyeth,

B. 256. enuenyméþ WCOB; enuenymed LR.
 feet (!) L.

257. po feet WR; pro-

The larke, that is a lasse fowel · is loueloker of lydene,
 And swettur of sauour · and swyfter of wynges.
 To lowe-lyuynges men · the larke is resembled, 188
 And to leelle and to lyf-holy · that louen alle treuthe.
 Thus Porfirie and Plato · and poetes menye
 Lykneth in here logyk · the leeste fowel oute.
 And whether hij be saf other nat saf · the sothe wot nat clergie,
 Ne of Sortes, ne of Salamon · no scripture can telle 193
 Whether thei be in helle other in heuene ; · other Aristotle the wise.
 Ac god is so good, ich hope · sitthe he gaf hem wittes
 To wissen ous weyes ther-with · that wenen to be saued, 196
 And the bettere for here bookes— · to bidden we been holde
 That god for hus grace · gyue here saules reste;
 · For lettred men were but lewede men ȝut · ne were the lore
 of tho clerkes.
 ‘Alle these clerkes,’ quath ich tho · ‘that on Crist byleyuen,
 Seggen in here sarmons · that nother Sarrasyns ne Iewes 201
 With-oute baptisme, as by here bokes · beeth nat ysaued.’
 ‘*Contra*,’ quath Ymaginatif tho · and comsed to loure,
 And seide, ‘*uix saluabitur iustus in die iudicii*;
Ergo saluabitur,’ quath he · and seide no more Latyn. 204
 ‘Traianus was a trewe knyght · and took neuere Crystendome,
 And he is saf, seith the bok · and his soule in heuene.
 Ther is follyng of font · and follyng in blod-shedynges,
 And thorw fuyr is follyng · and al is ferm by-leyue ; 208
Aduenit ignis diuinus, non comburens sed illuminans.
 Ac treuthe, that trespassed neuere · ne transuersede aȝens the
 lawe,
 Bote lyuede as his lawe tauhte · and leyueþ ther be no bettere,
 And yf ther were, he wolde · and in suche a wil deyeth— 211

C. 192. wether P. 194. Wether P. After l. 194 S inserts these five lines, which occur also in the Duke of Westminster's MS.:—

Iob was a paynym · and plesede god a prys,
 And aristele (*sic*) al-so · sewede þe same secte,
 And lad ful holy lyf · astur lawe of kynde,
 Where-fore hit semed soþly · by sondry skylus to schewe
 þat he is saf as was Iob · I can not seye þe soþe.

196. sauede P. 198. gyue MS; ȝyue K; ȝeue I; ȝiue T; ȝyf (*badly*) P.
 202. theese P. 205. triwe P. 206. is (*for his*) P. 207. of (*for in*) P.
 210. lyuede IT; leuede MG; leyuede P. P om. his. leyue (*for leyueþ*) P.

Ne wolde neuere trewe god · but treuth were allowed;
 And where it worth or worth nouzt · the bileue is grete of
 treuth, 288

And an hope hangyng ther-inne · to haue a mede for his treuthe.

For, *Deus dicitur quasi dans vitam eternam suis, hoc est,*
fidelibus; et alibi;

si ambulauero in medio umbre mortis, etc.

The glose graunteth vpon that vers · a gret mede to treuthe,
 And witt and wisdom, quod that wye · ‘was somme tyme
 tresore,

To kepe with a comune · no katel was holde bettere, 292
 And moche murth and manhod:—and rízt with that he
 vanesched.

B. 289. &c. CROB; LW. om.

Wolde neuere trewe god · bote trewe treuthe were a-lowed. 212
 And where hit worth other nat worth · the by-leyue is gret of
 treuthe,

And hope hongeth ay ther-on · to haue that treuthe deserueth ;

(Quia super pauca fidelis fuisti, supra multa te constituam :

And that is loue and large huyre · yf the lord be trewe,
 And cortesie more than couenant was · what so clerkes carpen ;
 For al worth as god wole'— · and ther-with he vanshede. 217

Hic explicit passus quintus de Dowel.

C. 212. a-lowede P.

PASSUS XIII.

Passus terciodecimus.

AND I awaked there-with · witles nerehande,
 And as a freke that fre were · forth gan I walke
 In manere of a mendynaunt · many a ȝere after,
 And of this metyng many tyme · moche thouȝt I hadde. 4
 First, how Fortune me failled · at my moste nede,
 And how that Elde manaced me · myȝt we euere meten;

And how that freris folwed · folke that was riche,
 And folke that was pore · at litel prys thei sette, 8
 And no corps in her kirkeȝerde · ne in her kyrke was buryed,
 But quikke he biquethe hem auȝte · or shulde helpe quyte her
 dettes.

And how this coueitise ouercome · clerkes and prestes,
 And how that lewed men ben ladde · but owre lorde hem helpe,
 Thorough vnkonnyng curatoures · to incurable peynes. 13
 And how that Ymagynatyf · in dremeles me tolde,
 Of Kynde and of his connyng · and how curteise he is to bestes,

And how louynge he is to bestes · on londe and on water; 16
 Leueth he no lyf · lasse ne more;
 The creatures that crepen · of Kynde ben engendred.
 And sitthen how Ymagynatif seyde · *vix iustus saluabitur*,
 And whan he had seyde so · how sodeynelich he passed. 20

I lay down longe in this thouȝte · and atte laste I slepte,
 And, as Cryste wolde, there come Conscience · to conforte me
 that tyme,

And bad me come to his courte · with Clergye sholde I dyne.
 And for Conscience of Clergye spake · I come wel the rather,

PASSUS XVI.

Incipit passus sextus de dowel.

AND ich awakede ther-with · wittlees ner hande;
 As a frek that feye were · forth gan ich walke
 In manere of a mendinaunt · meny ȝeres after.
 And meny tyme of this meteles · muche thouhte ich hadde; 4
 Furst, how Fortune me failede · at my moste neede,
 And how Elde manacede me · so myghte happe,
 That, yf ich lyuede longe · leue me by-hynde,
 And vanshie alle myne vertues · and myne faire lockes. 8
 And how that freres folweden · folk that was ryche,
 And people that was poure · at lytel prys setten;
 Ne corses of poure comune · in here kirke-ȝerd moste ligge,
 Bote yf he quike by-quethe hem auht · other wolde helpe aquite
 here dettes. 12
 And how this couetise ouer-cam · alle kynne sectes,
 As wel lerede as lewede · and lord as the bonde.
 And how that lewede men ben ladde · bote oure lord hem helpe,
 Thorow vnconnyng curatours · to incurable peynes. 16
 And how that Ymaginatif · in dremeles me tolde
 Of Kynde and of hus connyng · and what connyng he ȝaf to
 bestes,
 How louyng he is to eche lyf · a londe and a watere;
 For alle he wisseth and ȝeueth wit · that walketh other crepeth.
 And ich meruailede in herte · how Ymagynatif saide, 21
 That *iustus* by-fore Iesu · *in die iudicii*
Non saluabitur · bote *uix* helpe;
 And, whanne he hadde seide so · how sodeynlich he vanshede;
 And so ich mused vpon this matere · that me luste to slepe. 25
 Thenne cam Conscience · and Cleregie after,
 And beden me ryse and rome · for with Reson sholde ich dyne.
 And ich a-ros and romed forth · with Reson we mette. 28

C. 6. so—happe IMKSG; so longe myghte ich happe PE. 7. lyuede
 IMKSTG; leuede P. 11. kirke IT; churche PES. 13. ow (*for how*) P.
 17. that IKTG; P *om.* 19. is IMKSTG; was PE. 28. we EIMKSTG;
 ich P.

And there I say a maistre · what man he was I neste, 25
That lowe louted · and loueliche to Scripture.

Conscience knewe hym wel · and welcomed hym faire;
Thei wesshen and wypeden · and wenten to the dyner. 28
Ac Pacience in the paleis stode · in pilgrymes clothes,
And preyde mete for charite · for a pore heremyte.

Conscience called hym in · and curteisliche seide,
'Welcome, wye, go and wasshe · thow shalt sitte sone.' 32

This maister was made sitte · as for the moste worthy,
And thanne Clergye and Conscience · and Pacience cam after.
Pacience and I · were put to be macches,
And seten by owre selue · at a syde-borde. 36

Conscience called after mete · and thanne cam Scripture,
And serued hem thus sone · of sondry metes manye,
Of Austyn, of Ambrose · of alle the foure euangelistes;

Edentes & bibentes que apud eos sunt.

Ac this maister ne his man · no manere flesshe eten, 40
Ac thei ete mete of more coste · mortrewes and potages;
Of that men mys-wonne · thei made hem wel at ese.
Ac her sauce was ouer-soure · & vnsauourelly grounde,
In a morter, *post-mortem* · of many bitter peyne, 44
But if thei synge for tho soules · and wepe salt teres:

*Vos qui peccata hominum comeditis, nisi pro eis lacrimas et
orationes effunderitis, ea que in delicijs comeditis, in tor-
mentis euometis.*

Conscience ful curteisly tho · comaunded Scripture
Bifor Pacience bred to brynge · and me that was his macche.
He sette a soure lof to-for vs · and seyde, '*agite penitenciam,*'
And sith he drough vs drynke · *diu-perseuerans.* 49
'As longe,' quod I, 'as I lyue · and lycame may dure!'
'Here is propre seruice,' quod Pacience · 'ther fareth no prynce
bettere;'

And thanne he brouzt vs forth a mees of other mete · of
Miserere-mei-deus; 52

And he brouzte vs of *Beati-quorum* · of *Beatus-virres* makynge,
Et-quorum-lecta-sunt · *peccata* in a disshe
Of derne shrifte, *Dixi* · and *confitebor tibi*!
'Brynge Pacience some pitaunce' · pryueliche quod Conscience;

We reuerencede Reson · and romed forth softeliche,
 And mette with a mayster · a man ylike a frere.
 Conscience knew hym wel · and welcomede hym fayre;
 Thei wisshen and wypeden · and wenten to the dyner. 32
 Pacience as a poure thyng cam · and preide mete for charite,
 Ylike to Peers Plouhman · as he a palmere were,
 Crauede and criede · for Cristes loue of heuene,
 A meles mete for a poure man · other moneye, yf thei hadden.

Conscience knew hym wel · and welcomede hem alle; 37
 Thei wisshen and wypeden · and wenten and setten.

The maister was made to sitte furst · as for the most worthy;
 Reson stod and stihlede · as for stywarde of halle. 40
 Pacience and ich weren · yput to be mettes,
 And seten by ous selue · at a syd-table.

Clergie calde after mete · and thenne cam Scripture,
 And seruede hem thus sone · of sondrie metes menie, 44
 Of Austyn, of Ambrosie · of alle the foure euangelies,

Edentes et bibentes que apud illos sunt.

Ac of these metes this maister · myghte nat wel chewe;
 For-thy he eet mete of more cost · mortrewes and potages.
 Of that that men myswonne · thei maden hem wel at ese, 48
 Ac here sauce was ouere-soure · and vnsauerliche grounde,
 In a mortar, *post-mortem* · of meny bitere peynes,
 Bote yf thei synge for tho soules · and wepe salte teeres;

*Uos qui peccata hominum comeditis, nisi pro eis lacrimas
 effuderitis, ea que in delicijs comeditis; in tormentis euometis.*

Thenne Reson radde · ryght a-non after, 52
 That Conscience comaunde sholde · to do come Scripture,
 And brynge bred for Pacience · bytynde apartie,
 And to me that was hus mette tho · and other mete bothe.
 He sette a soure loof · and seide, '*agite penitentiam*,' 56
 And sitthe he drow ous drynke · *diu-perseuerans*,
 'As longe,' quath he, 'as the lyf · and the licame may dure.'
 'This is a semeliche seruice!' · seide Pacience.

Thenne cam Contrition · that hadde coked for hem alle, 60

C. 32. wisshen T; wosshen P (*but see l. 38*). 34. he IMSTG; P *om.*
 41. yputt P. 45. of EIKSG; and P. 46. thees P. 51. *euometis* ST;
en emergitis (!) P. 57. he IMKSTG; PE *om.*

And thanne had Pacience a pitaunce · *pro-hac-orabit-ad-te-omnis-sanctus-in-tempore-oportuno* ; 57

And Conscience confortd vs · and carped vs mery tales,
Cor contritum et humiliatum, deus, non despicias.

Pacience was proude · of that propre seruice,
 And made hym muirth with his mete · ac I morned euere, 60
 For this doctoure on the heigh dese · dranke wyn so faste ;
Ve vobis qui potentes estis ad bibendum vinum !

He eet many sondry metes · mortrewes and puddynges,
 Wombe-cloutes and wylde braune · & egges yfryed with grece.
 Thanne seide I to my-self · so Pacience it herde, 64
 'It is nouzt foure dayes that this freke · bifor the den of Poules,
 Preched of penaunces · that Poule the apostle suffred,

In fame & frigore · and flappes of scourges ; 67
Ter cesus sum, et a iudeis quinquies quadragenas, &c.

Ac o worde thei ouerhuppen · at ech a tyme that thei preche,
 That Poule in his pistel · to al the peple tolde ;
Periculum est in falsis fratribus.

Holywrit bit men be war · I wil nouzt write it here 70
 On Englisch, an auenture · it sholde be reherced to ofte,
 And greue there-with that good men ben · ac gramarienes shul rede ;
Vnusquisque a fratre se custodiat, quia, ut dicitur, periculum est in falsis fratribus.

Ac I wist neuere freke that as a frere zede · bifor men on
 Englisshe
 Taken it for her teme · and telle it with-uten glosynge.
 Thei prechen that penaunce · is profitable to the soule,
 And what myschief and malese · Cryst for man tholed ; 76

Ac this goddes gloton,' quod I · 'with his gret chekes,
 Hath no pyte on vs pore · he performeth yuel ;
 That he precheth he preueth nouzt' · to Pacience I tolde,
 And wissched witterly · with wille ful egre, 80
 That disshes and doblers · bifor this ilke doctour,
 Were molten led in his maw · and Mahoun amyddes !

B. 58. *humilitatum* L.
 WCOB; moltoun L.

81. and *miswritten a in* L.

82. molten

And brouhte forth a pitaunce · was *pro-hac-orabit-omnis-sanctus-
in-tempore-oportuno*.

Conscience confortede ous · bothe Clergie and Scripture,

And seide, '*cor contritum & humiliatum, deus, non despicias.*'

Pacience was wel apaied · of this propre seruyse,
And mad murye with this mete; · ac ich mournede euere, 64
For a doctor at the heye deys · drank wyn faste—

Ue uobis qui potentes estis ad bibendum uinum—

And ete meny sondry metes · mortrews and poddynges,
Braun and blod of the goos · bacon and colhoppes.
Then seide ich to my-self · that Pacience hit hurde, 68
'Jut is nat thre daies don · that this doctor prechede
At seint Paules by-for the people · what penaunce thei suffreden,
Alle that coueitede to come · to heuene hye ioye;
And how that Paul the apostle · what penaunce he tholed 72
For oure lordes loue · as holy lettrure telleth;

In fame et frigore, etc.

Ac me wondreth in my witt · whi that thei ne preche,
As Paul the apostel prechede · to the people ofte,

Periculum in falsis fratribus!

Holy writ bit men be war · and wisliche hem kepe, 76
That no fals frere · thorw flatrynge hem by-gyle;
Ac me is loth, thow ich Latyn knowe · to lacky eny secte,
For alle we ben brethren · thauh we be diuersliche clothede.

Ac ich wiste neuere freek · that frere is ycalled 80
Of the fyue mendynauns · and made eny sarmon,
That took this for his teme · and told hit with-oute glose.
Thei prechen that penaunce · is profitable for the soule,
And what meschief and what mal ese · Crist for man tholed.
Ac this doctor and diuinour · and decretistre of canon, 85
And al-so a gnedy gloton · with to grete chekes,
Hath no pite on vs poure · he perfourneth vuele;
That he precheth he proueth nat' · to Pacience ich tolde, 88
And wisshede witerliche · with a wil ful egre,
That in the mawe of that maister · alle tho metes were,
Disches and dobeleres · with alle the deyntes after!

C. 62. seide MIKSTG; seiden PE. 69. this IMESTG; thees P. 79.
breythrene P. 80. ycalled P. 82. fore P. his IM; here PETG.
85. thes (for this) P. decretiste IMG; decretestre P. 89. whisshede P.
91. wit (for with) P.

'I shal Iangle to this Iurdan · with his Iust wombe,
 To telle me what penaunce is · of which he preched rather.'—
 Pacience perceyued what I thouzt · and wynked on me to be stille,
 And seyde, 'thow shalt se thus sone . whan he may no more,
 He shal haue a penaunce in his paunche · and pufte at ech a worde,
 And thanne shullen his guttis godele · and he shal galpen after;
 For now he hath dronken so depe · he wil deuyne sone, 89
 And preuen it by her Pocalips · and passioun of seynt Auereys,

That neither bacoun ne braune · blancmangere ne mortrewes
 Is noither fisshe ne flesshe · but fode for a penaunte. 92
 And thanne shal he testifie of a trinitee · and take his felawe to
 witnesse,

What he fonde in a freyel · after a freres lyuyng,
 And but if the fyrst lyne be lesyng · leue me neuere after!
 And thanne is tyme to take · and to appose this doctoure 96
 Of Dowel and of Dobet · and if Dobest be any penaunce.'—

And I sete stille, as Pacience seyde · and thus sone this doctour,
 As rody as a rose · rubbed his chekes,
 Coughed and carped · and Conscience hym herde, 100
 And tolde hym of a trinite · and toward vs he loked.
 'What is Dowel? sire doctour,' quod I · 'is Dowel any penaunce?'

'Dowel?' quod this doctour— · and toke the cuppe and dranke—
 'Do non yuel to thine euenecrystene · nouzt by thi powere.' 104

'By this day, sire doctour,' quod I · 'thanne be 3e nouzt in Dowel;
 For 3e han harmed vs two · in that 3e eten the puddyng,
 Mortrewes, and other mete · and we no morsel hade!
 And if 3e fare so in 3owre fermorie · ferly me thinketh, 108
 But chest be there charite shulde be · and 3onge childern dorste
 pleyne!

I wolde permute my penaunce with 3owre · for I am in poynte
 to Dowel!'

Thanne Conscience curteisliche · a contenaunce he made,
 And preynte vpon Pacience · to preie me to be stille, 112
 And seyde hym-self, 'sire doctour · and it be 3owre wille,
 What is Dowel and Dobet? · 3e deuynours knoweth.'

B. 91. blancmangere WCO; blaumanger or blanmanger L. 92. ne
 CROB; no L. 107. morsel WCB; mussel LRO.

'Ich shal Iangly to thys Iordan · with hus Iuste wombe, 92
 And a-pose hym what penaunce is · and purgatorie on erthe,
 And whi he lyueth nat as he lereth !' · 'let be,' quath Pacience,
 And seide, 'thow shalt seo thus sone · whan he may na more,
 He shal haue a penaunce in hus paunche · and puffe at eche
 worde; 96

Thenne shulleth his gottes godelen · and he by-gynne to galpe.
 Now he hath dronke so depe · he wol deuiny sone,
 And preouen it by here Apocalips · and by the passion of seint
 Aueray,

That nother bacon ne braun · blammanger ne mortreuus 100
 Ys nother fissh ne flessch · bote fode for penauntes;
 And take witnesse of the trinite · and take his felawe to wittnesse,
 What he fond in a forel · of a freres lyuyng;
 And bote the ferste leef be lesynge · leyf me neuere after ! 104
 And thenne is tyme to talke · and to apose this doctour
 Of Dowel and of Dobet · and yf Dobet do eny penaunce.'

Ich sat stille as Pacience wolde · and thus sone this doctour,
 As rody as a rose · roddede hus chekes, 108
 Kowede and carpede · and Conscience hym herde,
 And tolde of a trinite · and to-warde me he lokede.
 'What is Dowel, sire doctour?' quath ich · 'is Dobet eny
 penaunce?'

'Dowel?' quath this doctour · and he drank after, 112
 'Do thy neyhebores non harme · ne thy-selue nother,
 Thanne dost thou wel and wisliche · ich dar hit wel a-vouwe.'

'Certes, sire,' thanne seide ich · 'hit semeth nat here,
 In that 3e parteth nat with ous poure · that 3e passeth Dowel,
 Nother louyeth as 3e lereth · as oure lorde wolde, 117

Et uisitauit et fecit redemptionem plebis sue israel.

And 3e fare thus with 3oure sike freres · ferly me thynketh,
 Bote Dowel endite 3ow · *in die iudicii.*

Thenne Conscience ful curteisliche · a contenaunce he made,
 And preynthe vpon Pacience · to preye me be stille, 121
 And seide hymself, 'syre doctour · by so hit be 3oure wil,
 What is Dowel and Dobet? · 3e diuynours knoweth.'
 'Ich haue seide,' seide the seg · 'y can seye no bettere, 124

C. 93. what IMETG; wiche P. 97. he EM; PIT om. 102. is (for
 his) P. 113. thy IEG; the P (2nd time). 119. endite IMT; endyty P.

‘Dowel,’ quod this doctour · ‘do as clerkes techeth,
 And Dobet is he that techeth · and trauailleth to teche other,
 And Dobest doth hym-self so · as he seith and precheth:— 117

Qui facit et docuerit, magnus vocabitur in regno celorum.

‘Now thow, Clergye,’ quod Conscience · ‘carpest what is Dowel.’
 ‘I haue seuene sones,’ he seyde · ‘seruen in a castel,
 There the lorde of Lyf wonyeth · to leren hym what is Dowel;
 Til I se tho seuene · and my-self acorden, 121

I am vnhardy,’ quod he · ‘to any wyzt to preue it.
 For one Pieres the Ploughman · hath inpugned vs alle,
 And sette alle sciences at a soppe · saue loue one, 124
 And no tixte ne taketh · to meyntene his cause,
 But *dilige deum* · and *domine, quis habitabit, &c.*

And seith that Dowel and Dobet · aren two infinites,
 Whiche infinites, with a feith · fynden oute Dobest, 128
 Which shal saue mannes soule · thus seith Piers the Ploughman.

‘I can nouzt her-on,’ quod Conscience · ‘ac I knowe wel Pieres;
 He wil nouzt aȝein holy writ speken · I dar wel vndertake;
 Thanne passe we ouer til Piers come · and preue this in dede.
 Pacience hath be in many place · and perauntre cnoweth 133
 That no clerke ne can · as Cryst bereth witnesse;

Pacientes vincunt, &c.

‘At ȝowre preyere,’ quod Pacyence tho · ‘so no man displese hym;
Disce,’ quod he, ‘*doce · dilige inimicos.* 136

Disce, and Dowel · *doce,* and Dobet;

Dilige, and Dobest · thus tauzte me ones

A lemman that I loued · Loue was hir name.

“With wordes and with werkes,” quod she · “and wille of thyne
 herte, 140

Thow loue lelly thi soule · al thi lyf-tyme;
 And so thow lere the to louye · for the lordes loue of heuene,
 Thine enemye in al wyse · euene-forth with thi-selue.

Cast coles on his hed · and al kynde speche, 144

Bothe with werkes and with wordes · fonde his loue to wyne;

And lay on hym thus with loue · til he laughe on the;

And but he bowe for this betyng · blynde mote he worthe!

Ac for to fare thus with thi frende · foly it were, 148

For he that loueth the lelly · lyte of thyne coueiteth.

Bote do as doctours telleth · for Dowel ich hit holde; 125
 That traueileth to teche othere · for Dobet ich it holde;
 And he that doth as he techeth · ich halde hit for a Dobest;

Qui facit et docuerit, magnus uocabitur.

‘Now thow, Cleregie,’ quath Conscience · ‘carpe what is Dowel.’
 ‘Haue me excused,’ quath Cleregie · ‘by Crist, bote in scole,
 Shal no such motif be meued · for me, bote there
 For Peers loue the Plouhman · that enpugnede ones
 Alle kyne konnynges · and alle kyne craftes, 132
 Saue loue and leaute · and lounesse of herte,
 And no tixt taketh · to preoue this for trewe
 Bote *dilige deum & proximum* · and *domine, quis habitabit in*
tabernaculo, &c.;

And preoueth by pure skyle · inparfit alle thynges, 136
Nemo bonus,

Bote leel loue and treuthe · that loth is to be yfoundede.’

Quath Peers the Plouhman · ‘*patientes uincunt.*
 By-for perpetual pees · ich shal preoue that ich seide,
 And a-vowe by-for god · and for-sake hit neuere, 140
 That *disce, doce, dilige · deum* and thyn enemye;
 Hertely thou hym helpe · emforth thy myzt,
 Cast hote coles on hus hefde · of alle kynde speche,
 Fonde thorgh wit and with worde · hus loue for to wyne, 144
 And 3if hym eft and eft · euere at hus neede;
 Conforte hym with thy catel · and with thy kynde speche,
 And leye on hym thus with loue · tyl he lauhe on the;
 And bote he bowe for this betynge · blynd mote he worthe!’
 And whanne he hadde worded thus · wiste no man after, 149
 Where Peers Plouhman by-cam · so priueliche he wente.
 And Reson ran after · and ryght with him 3eode;
 Saue Conscience and Cleregie · ich couthe no mo aspye. 152
 And Pacience propreliche spak · tho Peers was thus passed,
 ‘That loueth lelly,’ quath he · ‘bote lytel thyng coueyteth.

C. 129. me EIMTG; P *om.* 130. meeuede P. 139. precouye P;
 see l. 136. 143. hote EIMTG; oute P. 146. Conforte EG; Conforty P.
 148. he IMTG; 3e PM (1st time). he IT; ich PE (2nd time). 149.
 weste (for wiste) P. 151. and IMTG; P *om.*

Kynde loue coueiteth nouzte · no catel but speche,
With half a laumpe lyne in latyne · *ex vi transicionis.*"

I bere there-inne aboute · fast ybounde Dowel, 152
In a signe of the Saterdag · that sette firste the kalendare,
And al the witte of the Wednesday · of the nexte wyke after;
The myddel of the mone · is the mizte of bothe.
And here-with am I welcome · there I haue it with me.' 156

'Vndo it, late this doctour deme · if Dowel be therinne;
For, bi hym that me made · mizte neuere pouerte,
Miseise, ne myschief · ne man with his tonge,
Colde, ne care · ne compaignye of theues, 160
Ne noither hete, ne haille · ne non helle pouke,
Ne noither fuire ne flode · ne fere of thine enemy
Tene the eny tyme · and thow take it with the;

Caritas nichil timet.

And eek, haue god my soule! · and thow wilt it craue, 164
There nys neyther emperour ne emperesse · erl, kynge, ne baroun,
Pope, ne patriarch · that puyre reson ne schal make
The meyster of alle tho men · thoruz mizt of this redeles;
Nouzt thoruz wicche-craft, but thoruz wit · (and thow wilt thi-selue)
Do kynge and quene · and alle the comune after 169
ȝyue the alle that thei may ȝiue · as for the best ȝemere,
And, as thou demest, wil thei do · alle here dayes after;

Pacientes vincunt, &c.

'It is but a *Dido*,' quod this doctour · 'a dysoures tale. 172
Al the witt of this worlde · and wizte mennes strengthe
Can nouzt confourmen a pees · bytwene the pope and his enemys,
Ne bitwene two Cristene kynges · can no wizte pees make,
Profitable to ayther peple' · and put the table fro hym, 176
And toke Clergye and Conscience · to conseil, as it were,
That Pacience tho moste passe · for pilgrimes kunne wel lye.

Ac Conscience carped loude · and curteislich seide,
'Frendes, fareth wel' · and faire spake to Clergye, 180
'For I wil go with this gome · if god wil ȝiue me grace,
And be pilgryme with Pacience · til I haue proued more.'

'What?' quod Clergye to Conscience · 'ar ȝe coueitouse nouthe
After ȝeresȝyues or ȝiftes · or ȝernen to rede redeles? 184

B. 164-171. These lines in R only; but cf. C-text. 170. for þe; such is my conjecture; R has þe for.

Ich wolde, and ich will hadde · wynnen al Fraunce
 With-oute bruting of burnes · other eny blod-sheding; 156
 Ich take wittnesse,' quath he · 'at holy writ a partie;

Pacientes uincunt.

For, by hym that me made! · myȝte neuere pouerte,
 Miseise, ne myschief · ne man with hus tonge
 Tene the eny tyme · and thow take Pacience, 160
 And bere hit in thy bosom · abowte wher thou wendest,
 In the corner of a cart-whel · with a crowe croune.

Shal neuere burne be abaissed · that hath this a-boute,
 Neither hete ne hail · ne helle pouke hym greue, 164
 Neither fuyr, nother flod · ne be a-fered of enemye;
Caritas expellit omnem timorem;

Ther nis wyght in this worlde · that wolde the lette
 To haue alle londes at thy lykyng · and the here lord make,
 And maister of alle here meeble · and of here moneye after, 168
 The kynge and alle the comune · and clergie to the aloute
 As for here lorde and ledere · and lyuen as thou techest.'

'This is a *Dido*,' quath this doctour · 'a disours tale!
 Al the witt of this worlde · ne wyghte mennes strengthe 171
 Can nat performen a pees · of the pope and of hus enemys

Profitable for bothe parties'— · and put the bord fram hym,
 And tok Conscience and Clergie · to counsel, as hit were.

C. 155. adde P.
 MT; *Dydo* S; *dico* P.

162. *From* IMETS; P *om. this line.*
 172. wordle P.

171. *Dido*

I shal brynge ȝow a bible · a boke of the olde lawe,
 And lere ȝow, if ȝow lyke · the leest poynte to knowe,
 That Pacience the pilgryme · perfitly knewe neuere.'

'Nay, bi Cryste,' quod Conscience to Clergye · 'god the forȝelde,
 For al that Pacience me profreth · proude am I litel. 189
 Ac the wille of the wye · and the wille of folke here
 Hath moeued my mode · to mourne for my synnes.
 The good wille of a wizte · was neure bouȝte to the fulle; 192
 For there nys no tresore therto · to a trewe wille.
 Haued nouȝt Magdeleine more · for a boxe of salue,
 Than Zacheus for he seide · *dimidium bonorum meorum do pau-*
peribus?

And the pore widwe · for a peire of mytes, 196
 Than alle tho that offreden · in-to *gazafilacium?*'

Thus curteislich Conscience · congeyde fyrst the frere,
 And sithen softliche he seyde · in Clergyes ere,
 'Me were leuer, by owre lorde · and I lyue shulde, 200
 Haue pacience perfitlich · than half thy pakke of bokes!
 Clergye to Conscience · no congeye wolde take,
 But seide ful sobreliche · 'thow shalt se the tyme,
 Whan thow art wery for-walked · wilne me to consaille.' 204

'That is soth,' seyde Conscience · 'so me god helpe!
 If Pacience be owre partyng felawe · and pryue with vs bothe,
 There nys wo in this worlde · that we ne shulde amende,
 And confourmen kynges to pees · and al kynnes londes, 208
 Sarasenes and Surre · and so forth alle the Iewes
 Turne in-to the trewe feithe · and in-til one byleue.'

'That is soth,' quod Clergye · 'I se what thow menest,
 I shal dwelle as I do · my deuore to shewen, 212
 And conformen fauntekynes · and other folke ylered,
 Tyl Pacience haue preued the · and parfite the maked.'

Conscience tho with Pacience passed · pilgrymes as it were.
 Thanne had Pacience, as pylgrymes han · in his poke vittailles,
 Sobrete, and symple-speche · and sothfaste-byleue, 217
 To conforte hym and Conscience · if they come in place
 There Vnkyndenesse and Coueytise is · hungrye contrees bothe.

And as thei went by the weye · of Dowel thei carped; 220
 Thei mette with a mynstral · as me tho thouȝte.

Ac ich took kepe how Conscience · congede sone this
 doctour,
 And sitthe he seide to Clergie · so that ich hit herde, 177
 ‘By Cryst,’ quath Conscience · ‘Clergie, ich wol nat lye,
 Me were leuere, by oure lorde · and ich lyuye sholde,
 Haue pacience parfitliche · than half thy pack of bokes! 180
 Lettrure and longe studie · letteth ful menye,
 That thei knoweth nat,’ quath Conscience · ‘what is kynde
 Pacience.
 For-thi,’ quath Conscience · ‘Crist ich the by-teche,
 With Pacience wol ich passe · parfitnesse to fynde.’ 184

Thus thei wente forth here way · with gret wil ich folewede.
 Thenne hadde Pacience, as pilgrimes hauen · in here poke vitales,
 Sobrete and symple-speche · and sothfast-byleyue, 187
 To comforty hym and Conscience · yf thei come in place
 Ther Vnkyndnesse and Couetyse ys · hongry contreis bothe.
 And as thei wente by the wey · of Dowel gan thei carpe; 190
 Thei mette with a mynstral · as me tho thouhte.

C. 176. congede SG; conged T; conneide P. 184. Whit (*for* With) P.

Paciencce apposed hym fyrste · and preyed hym he sholde hem telle
To Conscience, what crafte he couthe · an to what contree he wolde.

‘I am a mynstral,’ quod that man · ‘my name is *Actiua-vita* :
Alle ydel ich hatye · for of actyf is my name. 225

A wafrere, wil ȝe wite · and serue many lordes,
And fewe robes I fonge · or furred gounes.

Couthe I lye to do men laughe · thanne lacchen I shulde · 228
Other mantel or money · amonges lordes mynstralles.

Ac for I can noither tabre ne trompe · ne telle none gestes,
Farten, ne fythelen · at festes, ne harpen,

Iape ne logly · ne gentlych pype, 232

Ne noyther sailly ne saute · ne synge with the gyterne,
I haue none gode gyftes · of thise grete lordes,

For no bred that I brynge forth · saue a beneson on the Sonday,
Whan the prest preyeth the peple · her *pater-noster* to bidde

For Peres the Plowman · and that hym profite wayten. 237

And that am I, Actyf · that ydelnesse hatye,

For alle trewe trauaillours · and tilieres of the erthe ;

Fro Mychelmesse to Mychelmesse · I fynde hem with wafres. 240

Beggeres and bidderes · of my bred crauen,

Faitoures and freres · and folke with brode crounes.

I fynde payne for the pope · and prouendre for his palfrey,

And I hadde neuere of hym · haue god my treuthe, 244

Noither prouendre ne parsonage · ȝut of the popis ȝifte,

Saue a pardoun with a peys of led · and two pollis amydde!

Hadde iche a clerke that couthe write · I wolde caste hym a bille,

That he sent me vnder his seel · a salue for the pestilence, 248

And that his blessing and his bulles · bocches miȝte destroye :

*In nomine meo demonia eicient, et super egros manus imponent,
et bene habebunt.*

And thanne wolde I be prest to the peple · paste for to make,
And buxome and busy · aboute bred and drynke

For hym and for alle his · fonde I that his pardoun 252

Miȝte lechen a man · as I beleue it shulde.

For sith he hath the powere · that Peter hym-self hadde,

Pacience a-posed hym · and preide he sholde telle 192
 What craft that he couthe · and cortesly he seide,
 'Ich am a mynstral,' quath this man · 'my name is *Activa-vita*,
 Peers prentys the Plouhman · alle people to comfortye.'
 'What manere mynstralcie · my dere frend,' quath Conscience, 196
 'Hast thou vsed other haunted · al thy lyf-tyme?'
 'Mynstralcie can ich nat muche · bote make men murye,
 As a waffrer with waffres · and welcome godes gistes.
 Of my labour thei lauhe · the lasse and the more. 200
 The poure and the riche · y plese and payn fynde,
 And fewe robis ich fonge · other forrede gounes.
 Wolde ich lye and do men lauhe · thenne lacchen ich sholde
 Mantels other moneye · a-mong lordes minstrales. 204
 Ich can nat tabre ne trompe · ne telle faire gestes,
 Farten, ne fithelen · at festes, ne harpen,
 Iapen ne Iogelen · ne gentelliche pipe,
 Nother sailen ne sautrien · ne singe with the giterne. 208
 Ich haue none gode gyftes · of these grete lordes
 For no bred that ich by-trauaile · to bryng by-fore lordes.
 Ne were hit that the parishe · prayeth for me on Sonedayes,
 Ich am sory that ich sew other sette · bote for my-self one.
 Ac the prest and other people · prayeth for Peers Plouhman,
 And for me, Actyf, hus man · that ydelnesse hate. 214
 For lordes and lorelles · luthere and goode,
 Fro Myhel-masse to Myhel-masse · ich fynde mete and drynke.
 Ich fynde payn for the pope · and praye hym ich wolde 217
 That pestilences to pees · and to parfit loue turne.
 For founde ich that hus blessing · and hus bulle myghte
 Letten this luther eir · and lechen the syke— 220
 As the booke bereth wittnesse · that he bere myghte
 In hus mouth mercy · and amende vs alle,
 Super egros manus imponent, et bene se habebunt—
 Thenne wolde ich bee busy · and buxum to helpe
 Eche kynne creature · that on Cryst by-leyueth. 224
 For sutthe he hath the power · that seynt Peter hadde,

C. 194. thees (*for* this) P. 199. wolcome P. gistes EMFS; gustes P.
 206. fithelen IST; fithelyn P. 207. Iogelyn P. 209. goude (*for* gode) P.
 210. bytrauaily P. 211. parishe I; pariss T; parshe P. 212. sew MS;
 sewe P. 215. goude (*for* goode) P. 220. lechin P. 221. booke I;
 boke S; book T; bookes P.

He hath the potte with the salve · sothly, as me thinketh :

*Argentum et aurum non est mihi; quod autem habeo, hoc
tibi do; in nomine domini, surge et ambula.*

Ac if miȝte of miracle hym faille · it is for men ben nouȝt
worthy 256

To haue the grace of god · and no gylte of the pope.

For may no blyssyng done vs bote · but if we wil amende,

Ne mannes masse make pees · amonges Cristene peple,

Tyl pruyde be purelich fordo · and that thourgh payn defaute.

For ar I haue bred of mele · ofte mote I swete. 261

And ar the comune haue corne ynough · many a colde mornynge;

So, ar my wafres ben ywrouȝt · moche wo I tholye.

Alle Londoun I leue · liketh wel my wafres, 264

And lowren whan thei lakken hem— · it is nouȝt longe ypassed,

There was a carful comune · whan no carte come to tounne

With bake bred fro Stretforth · tho gan beggeres wepe,

And werkmen were agaste a litel · this wil be thouȝte longe. 268

In the date of owre dryȝte · in a drye Apprile,

A thousande and thre hondreth · tweis thretty and ten,

My wafres there were gesen · whan Chichestre was maire.'

I toke gode kepe, by Cryst · and Conscience bothe, 272

Of Haukyn the actyf man · and how he was y-clothed.

He hadde a cote of Crystendome · as holykirke bileueth,

Ac it was moled in many places · with many sondri plottes,

Of Pruyde here a plotte, and there a plotte · of vnboxome
speche, 276

Of scornynge and of scoffyng · and of vnskilful berynge,

As in aparaille and in porte · proude amonges the peple,

Otherwyse than he hath · with herte or syȝte shewynge; 279

Hym willynge that alle men wende · he were that he is nouȝte.

For-why he bosteth and braggeth · with many bolde othes,

And in-obedient to ben vndernome · of any lyf lyuyng,

And so syngulere by hym-self · as to syȝte of the poeple,

Was none suche as hym-self · ne none so pope-holy, 284

Y-habited as an hermyte · an ordre by hym-selue,

Religioun sanz reule · and resonable obedience;

Lakkyng lettred men · and lewed men bothe,

B. 255. *hoc* RO; LCWB *om.* 265. *hem* WR; *it* LO. 267. *bake* R;
LWCOB *om.* (*but it improves the line*). 284. *pope* R; *pompe* L.

He hath pureliche the pot · with the same salue ;

Argentum et aurum non est michi ; quod autem habeo, hoc tibi do, etc.

Ac yf myghte of miracle hym faile · hit is for men beeth nat
worthi

For to haue the grace of god · and no gult in the pope. 228

For may no blessynge do vs bote · bote yf we wol amende,

Ne mannes preier make pees · among Cristine people,

Til prude be pureliche for-do · and that thorw payn defaute ;

Ex habundantia panis et uini turpissimum peccatum aduenit.

Pure plente of payn · the people of Sodomye, 232

And reste and riche metes · rybaudes hem made.'

[Continued on p. 415 ; compare l. 232 above with l. 75 on p. 418.]

From
C. vii.
30-40.

[Prout of aparail · in porte amonge the puple
Other-wise than ich haue · with-ynne other with-oute,
Me wilnyng that men wende · ich were, as in aueyr, 32
Riche, and resonable · and ryghtful of lyuyng,
Bostyng and braggyng · wyth meny bolde othes,
Anauntyng vp-on my veine glorie · for eny vndernymyng ;
And 3ut so synguler by my-self · as to sight of the puple, 36
Was non suche as my-self · ne non so pope-holy,
Som tyme in on secte · som tyme in another ;
In alle kynne couetyse · contrenede how ich myghte
Be holde for holy · an hondred sithe, by that encheison ; 40

In lykyng of lele lyf · and a lyer in soule ; 288
 With inwit and with outwitt · ymagenen and studye,
 As best for his body be · to haue a badde name,
 And entermeten hym ouer-al · ther he hath nouzt to done,
 Wilnyng that men wende · his witte were the best, 292
 Or for his crafty kunnyng · or of clerkes the wisest,
 Or strengest on stede · or styuest vnder gurdel,
 And louelokest to loken on · and lelest of werkes,
 And non so holy as he · ne of lif clenner, 296
 Or feyrest of feytures · of fourme and of schafte,
 And most sotyl of songe · other sleyest of hondes,
 And large to lene · losse there-by to cacche ;
 And if he gyueth ouzte pore gomes · telle what he deleth ; 300
 Pore of possessioun · in purse and in coffre,
 And as a lyon on to loke · and lordeliche of speche.
 Baldest of beggeres · a bostour that nouzt hath,
 In towne and in tauernes · tales to telle, 304
 And segge thinge that he neuere seigh · and for soth sweren it ;
 Of dedes that he neuere dyd · demen and bosten,
 And of werkes that he wel dyd · witnesse and seggen—
 ‘Lo! if 3e leue me nouzt · or that I lye wenen, 308
 Axeth at hym or at hym · and he 3ow can telle,
 What I suffred and seighe · and some tymes hadde,
 And what I couth and knewe · and what kynne I come of.’
 Al he wolde that men wiste · of werkes and of wordes, 312
 Which myzte plese the peple · and praysen hymselfen :
Si hominibus placerem, Christi seruus non essem ;
Et alibi : nemo potest duobus dominis seruire.
 ‘Bi Criste,’ quod Conscience tho · ‘thi best cote, Haukyn,
 Hath many moles and spottes · it moste ben ywasshe.’ 315
 ‘3e, who so toke hede,’ quod Haukyn · ‘byhynde and bifore,
 What on bakke and what on bodyhalf · and by the two sydes,
 Men sholde fynde many frounces · and many foule plottes.’
 And he torned hym as tyte · and thanne toke I hede,
 It was fouler by felefolde · than it firste semed. 320
 It was bidropped with Wratthe · and wikked wille,
 With Enuye and yuel speche · entysyng to fyzte,

B. 293-299. These lines in R only ; yet found in the C-text in a different part of the poem ; see p. 405, ll. 42-46.

From
C. vii.
41-60.

Wilnede that men wende · my werkes were the beste,
 And konnyngest of my craft · clerkes other othere,
 And strengest vp-on stede · and styneſt vnder gurdell,
 And louelokeſt to loken on · and lykyngest a bedde ; 44
 And lykyng of ſuch a lif · that no lawe preyeth,
 Prout of my faire fetours · and for ich ſonge ſhulle.
 And what ich gaf for godes loue · to god-sybbes ich tolde,
 Thei to wene that ich were · wel holy and wel almeſful, 48
 And non ſo bold beggere · to bydden and crane ;
 Tales to telle · in tauernes and in ſtreteſ,
 Thyng that neuere was thouht · and ȝut ich ſwor ich ſauh hit,
 And lyed on my lykame · and on my lyf bothe. 52
 Of werkes that ich wel dude · wittneſſe ich take,
 And ſygge to ſuche · that ſytten me by-ſyde,
 ‘Lo, yf ȝe leyue me nouht · other than ȝe wene ich lye,
 Aſke of hym other of hure · and thei conne ȝow telle 56
 What ich ſoffrede and ſeih · and ſom tyme hadde,
 And what ich knew and couthe · and what kyn ich kam of ;’ —
 Al ich wolde that men wuſte · when hit to pruyde ſoundede,
 As to be preiſed a-mong the puple · thauh ich poure ſemedede :
Si hominibus placerem, Christi ſeruus non eſſem.
Nemo poteſt duobus dominis ſeruire.’]

Lyinge and laughynge · and leue tonge to chyde;
 Al that he wist wykked · by any wizte, tellen it, 324
 And blame men bihynde her bakke · and bydden hem mes-
 chaunce;

And that he wist bi Wille · tellen it Watte,
 And that Watte wiste · Wille wiste it after,
 And made of frendes foes · thorough a false tonge, 328
 ‘Or with myzte of mouthe · or thorough mannes strengthe
 Auenge me fele tymes · other frete my-selue
 Wyth-inne, as a shepster shere;’ — · i-shrewed men and cursed!

*Cuius malediccione os plenum est, et amaritudine; sub
 lingua eius labor et dolor:*

*Et alibi: filij hominum, dentes eorum arma et sagille, et
 lingua eorum gladius acutus:—*

‘There is no lyf that I louye · lastyng any while, 332
 For tales that I telle · no man trusteth to me,
 And whan I may nouzt haue the maistrye · with malencolye I
 take,

That I cacche the crompe · the cardiacle some tyme,
 Or an ague in suche an angre · and some tyme a feure, 336
 That taketh me al a twelf-moneth · tyl that I despyse
 Lechecrafte of owre lorde · and leue on a wicche,
 And segge, that no clerke ne can · ne Cryste, as I leue,
 To the souter of Southwerke · or of Shordyche dame Emme!
 And segge, that no goddes worde · gaf me neuere bote, 341
 But thorw a charme had I chaunce · and my chief hele!’

I wayted wisloker · and thanne was it soiled
 With lykyng of Lecherye · as by lokyng of his eye. 344
 For vche a mayde that he mette · he made hir a signe
 Semyng to-synne-ward · and some tyme he gan taste
 Aboute the mouth, or bynethe · bygynneth to grope,
 Tyl eytheres wille waxeth kene · and to the werke zeden, 348
 As wel in fastyng-days and Frydayes · and forboden nyztes;
 And as wel in Lente as oute of Lente · alle tymes ylyche,
 Suche werkes with hem · were neuere oute of sesoun;
 Tyl thei myzte namore · and thanne had merye tales, 352
 And how that lechoures louyen · lauzen and iapen,
 And of her harlotrye and horedome · in her elde tellen.

[And blame men by-hynde hure bak · and bidde hem mes-
chaunce.

Al that he wiste by Wylle · to Watkyn he told hit,
And that he wiste by Watkyn · tolde hit Wille after;
And made foos of frendes · thorw fals and fykel tonge: 72

‘ Other thorw myghte of mouthe · other thorw meny sleighthes
Venged me fele tymes · other brend my-self with-ynne
Lyke a shappesters sheres · and shrewede myn emcristyne,
Azens the consail of Crist · as clerkes fynden in bokes: 76

*Cuius maledictione os plenum est et amaritudine et dolo:
sub lingua eius labor et dolor.*

*Filij hominum, dentes eorum arma et sagitte, et lingua
eorum gladius acutus.*

Whenne ich ne may haue the maistrie · suche malancolie ich take,
That ich cacche the crampe · the cardiacle som tyme,
Other an ague in suche an angre · and som tyme a feure,
That taketh me al a twelfmonthe · til that ich dispice 80
Leche-craft of oure lorde · and leyue on a wicche,
And sigge that no clerk can · ne Crist, as ich leyue,
To the souter of South-werk · such is hus grace.
For god, ne godes wordes · ne grace ne halp neuere, 84
Bote thorw a charme hadde ich a chaunce · and my chief hele.]

From
C. vii.
69-85.

[Ich, gulty in gost · to god ich me shryue
As in lykyng of lecherie · my licames gultes, 176
In wordes, in wedes · in waitynge of eyen.

To eche maide that ich mette · ich made hure a sygne
Semyng to synne-warde · and somme gan ich taste
A-boute the mouthe, and by-nythe · by-gan ich to grope, 180

Til oure bothers wil was on; · to werke we ȝeden
As wel fastyngdaies as Frydaies · and heye-feste euenes,
As luf in lente as oute of lente · alle tymes liche—

Suche werkus with ous · were neuere out of seson— 184

Til we myghte no more; · thanne hadde we murye tales
Of puterie and of paramours · and proueden thorw speches,
Handlyng and halsyng · and al-so thorw cussyng
Excityng oure aither other · til oure olde synne.] 188

From
C. vii.
175-188.

Thanne Pacience parceyued · of poyntes of his cote,
 Was colmy thorw Coueityse · and vnkynde desyrynge; 356
 More to good than to god · the gome his loue caste,
 And ymagyned how · he it myzte haue
 With false mesures and mette · and with false witnesse;
 Lened for loue of the wedde · and loth to do treuthe, 360
 And awaited thorwgh which · wey to bigile,
 And menged his marchaundyse · and made a gode moustre;—
 ‘The worste with-in was · a gret witte I lete hit,
 And if my neighbore had any hyne · or any beste elles, 364
 More profitable than myne · many sleightes I made,
 How I myzte haue it · al my witte I caste,
 And but I it had by other waye · atte laste I stale it,
 Or pryuiliche his purse shoke · vnpiked his lokkes, 368
 Or by nyzt or by day · aboute was ich euere,
 Thorwgh gyle to gadren · the good that ich haue.

3if I 3ede to the plow · I pynched so narwe,
 That a fote-londe or a forwe · fecchen I wolde, 372
 Of my nexte neighbore · nymen of his erthe;
 And if I rope, ouer-reche · or 3af hem red that ropen,
 To seise to me with her sykel · that I ne sewe neure.

And who so borwed of me · abouzte the tyme, 376
 With presentes priueliche · or payed somme certeyne.
 So, walde he or nouzt wolde he · wynnen I wolde;
 And bothe to kyth and to kyn · vnkynde of that ich hadde.

And who so cheped my chaffare · chiden I wolde, 380
 But he profred to paye · a peny or tweyne
 More than it was worth · and 3et wolde I swere,
 That it coste me moche more · swore manye othes.

In halydayes at holicherche · whan ich herde masse, 384
 Hadde I neuere wille, wot god · witterly to biseche
 Mercye for my mysdedes · that I ne morned more
 For losse of gode, leue me · than for my lykames giltes;
 As, if I had dedly synne done · I dred nouzt that so sore, 388
 As when I lened and leued it lost · or longe ar it were payed.
 So if I kydde any kyndenesse · myn euen-cristene to helpe,
 Vpon a cruel coueityse · myn herte gan hange.

B. 355. LR *om.* 2nd of. 356. vkynde L. 374. I WCOB; L *om.*
 376. borwed WR; borweth LCOB. aboute LR; abouzte WOB. 385.
 I WCOB; LR *om.*

From
C. vii.
258-277.

[With false wordes and wittes · ich haue wonne my goodes,
And with gyle and glosynge · gadered that ich haue,
Meddled my marchaundise · and mad a good monstre ; 260
The werst lay with-ynne · a gret wit ich let hit.
And yf my neyh3ebore hadde an hyne · other eny best ellys
More profitable than myn · ich made meny wentes,
How ich myght haue hit · al my wit ich caste. 264
And bote ich hadde hit by other wey · atte laste ich stal hit,
Other pryuyliche hus pors shok · vnpiked hus lokes.
And yf ich 3ede to the plouh · ich pynchede on hus half-acre,
That a fot-londe other a forwe · fecchen ich wolde, 268
Of my neyh3eboris next · nymen of hus erthe.
And yf y repe, ouere-recche · other 3af hem red that repen
To sese to me with here sykel · that ich sew neuere.
In halydayes at holy churche · whenne ich hurde messe, 272
Ich hadde neuere wil witerlich · to by-seche mercy
For my mysdedes · that ich ne mornede ofter
For lost of good, leyue me · then for lycames gultes.
Thauh ich dedliche synne dude · ich dradde hit nat so sore
As whenne ich lenede and leyuede hit lost · other longe er hit
were paied. 277

And if I sent ouer see · my seruauntz to Bruges, 392
 Or in-to Pruslonde my prentys · my profit to wayten,
 To marchaunden with monoye · and maken her eschaunges,
 Mizte neuere me conforte · in the mene tyme,
 Noither messe ne matynes · ne none manere siztes, 396
 Ne neuere penaunce perfourned · ne *pater-noster* seyde,
 That my mynde ne was more · on my gode, in a doute,
 Than in the grace of god · and his grete helps:

Vbi thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum.

3et the Glotoun with grete othes · his garnement hadde soyled,
 And foule be-flobered it · as with fals speche; 401
 There no nede ne was · tok godes name an idel,
 Swore there-by swithe ofte · and al by-swatte his cote.
 And more mete ete and dronke · then kende mizt defie— 404
 ‘And kauzte seknesse sum-tyme · for my sorfetes ofte;
 And thanne I dradde to deye · in dedlich synne’—
 That in-to wanhope he worthe · and wende nauzt to be saued,
 The whiche is Sleuthe so slow · that may no slithes helpe it,
 Ne no mercy amenden · the man that so deyeth. 409

Which ben the braunches · that bryngeth a man to Sleuth?
 Is, whanne a man morneth nouzte for his mysdedes · ne maketh
 no sorwe,

Ac penaunce that the prest enioigneth · perfourneth yuel, 412
 Doth none almes-dede · dret hym of no synne,
 Lyueth azein the bileue · and no lawe holdeth;
 Vch day is haliday with hym · or an heigh ferye;
 And if he auzte wole here · it is an harlotes tonge. 416
 Whan men carpeth of Cryst · or of clenness of soule,
 He wexeth wroth and wil nouzte here · but wordes of myrthe.
 Penaunce and pore men · and the passioun of seyntes
 He hateth to here there-of · and alle that it telleth. 420
 Thise ben the braunches, beth war · that bryngeth a man to
 wanhope!

3e lordes and ladyes · and legates of holicherche,
 That fedeth foles sages · flatereres and lyeres,
 And han likynge to lythen hem · to do 3ow to lawghe; 424

Ve vobis qui ridetis, etc.:

And 3iueth hem mete and mede · and pore men refuse,

B. 400-409. In R only, and the text is corrupt. 400. the must be inserted;
 R om. garnement = garment, miswritten granement R. 402. tok must be

From
C. vii.
278-285.

And yf ich sente ouer see · my seruaunt to Brugges,
Other in-to Prus my prentys · my profit to a-waite,
To marchaunde with monye · and maken here eschaunge, 280
Myghte neuere man comforty me · in the meyn tyme,
Neither matyns ne masse · ne othere manere syghtes,
And neuere penaunse performede · ne *pater-noster* seyde,
That my mynde ne was · more in my goodes 284
Than in godes grace · and hus grete myghte.
Ubi thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum.]

From
C. vii.
425-433.

[To the, god, ich Gloton · gulty me ȝelde
Of my trespas with tunge · ich can nauht telle how ofte,
Sworen 'thy saule and thy sydes' · and 'so help me, god
almighty!'
When that no ned was · meny tyme falsliche. 428
And ouer-sopede at my soper · and som tyme at nones
More than my kynde · myghte wel defye;
And as an hounde that et gras · so gan ich to brake,
And spilde that ich spele myghte · ich can nouht speke for shame
The vylenye of my foule mouthe · and of my foule mawe.] 433

From
C. viii.
70-85.

[Ac whiche be the braunches · that bryngeth men to sleuthe?
Ys, whanne a man mourneth nat · for hus mysdedes;
The penaunce that the prest enioyneth · parfourneth vuele, 72
Doth non almys-dedes · and drat nat of synne,
Lyueþ aȝens the by-leyue · and no lawe kepeth,
And hath no lykyng to lerne · ne of oure lord hure,
Bote harlotrie other horedom · other elles of som wynnyng. 76
Whan men carpen of Cryst · other of clenness of soule,
He wext wroth, and wol nat huyre · bote wordes of murthe.
Penaunce and poure men · and the passion of seyntes,
He hateth to huyre ther-of · and alle that ther-of carpen. 80
Thuse beth the braunches, be war · that bryngeth man to wan-
hope.
ȝe lordes and ladyes · and legates of holy churche,
That seden fool sages · flaterers and lyers,
And han lykyng to lythen hem · in hope to do ȝow lawghe:
Ve uobis qui ridetis, quia lugebitis, et cetera:
And ȝeueth suche mede and mete · and poure men refusen, 85

In ȝowre deth-deyinge · I drede me ful sore,
Lest tho thre maner men · to moche sorwe ȝow brynge :

Consencientes et agentes pari pena punientur.

Patriarkes and prophetes · and prechoures of goddes wordes 428
Sauen thorw her sarmoun · mannes soule fram helle ;
Riȝt so flatereres and foles · aren the fendes disciples,
To entice men thorw her tales · to synne and harlotrye.
Ac clerkes that knowen holywryt · shulde kenne lordes, 432
What Dauid seith of suche men · as the sauter telleth :

*Non habitabit in medio domus mee, qui facit superbiam et
qui loquitur iniqua :*

Shulde none harlote haue audience · in halle ne in chambres,
There wise men were · witnesseth goddes wordes ;
Ne no mysproude man · amonges lordes ben allowed. 436

Clerkes and kniȝtes · welcometh kynges ministrales,
And for loue of the lorde · litheth hem at festes ;
Muche more, me thenketh · riche men schulde
Haue beggeres byfore hem · the whiche ben goddes ministrales,
As he seyth hym-self · seynt Iohan bereth witnesse : 441

Qui vos spernit, me spernit.

For-thi I rede ȝow riche · reueles whan ȝe maketh
For to solace ȝoure soules · suche ministrales to haue ;
The pore, for a fol sage · syttyng at the heyȝ table, 444
And a lered man, to lere the · what oure lorde suffred,
For to saue thi soule · fram Sathan thin enemy,
And fithel the, with-out flaterynge · of gode Friday the storye ;
And a blynd man for a bourdeoure · or a bedrede womman,
To crie a largesse by-for oure lorde · ȝoure gode loos to schewe !
Thise thre maner ministrales · maketh a man to lawhe,
And, in his deth-deyinge · thei don him grete comforte,
That bi his lyue lythed hem · and loued hem to here. 452

Thise solaseth the soule · til hym-selue be-falle
In a wel gode hope, for he wrouȝte so · amonges worthi seyntes.
Ac flatereres and foles · thorw her foule wordes,
Leden tho that louen hem · to Luciferes feste, 456
With *turpiloquio*, a lay of sorwe · and Luciferes fithel.

Thus Haukyn the actyf man · hadde ysoiled his cote,
Til Conscience acouped hym there-of · in a curteise manere,
Whi he ne hadde wasshen it · or wyped it with a brusshe. 460

In þoure deth-deynge · ich drede me sore
 Lest tho manere men · to moche sorwe þow brynge;
 As god wole; *Consencientes et agentes pari pena puniuntur.*
 Patriarkes and prophetes · prechours of godes wordes 88
 Sauen thorgh here sermons · mannes soule fro helle;
 Ryt so flaterers and foles · aren the fendes procuratores,
 Entysen men thorgh here tales · to synne and to harlotrie.
 Clerkus that knowen this · sholde kenne lordes, 92
 What Dauid seide of suche men · as the sauter telleth,
 Non habitabit in medio domus mee qui facit superbiam,
 qui loquitur iniqua.
 Sholde non harlot haue audience · in halle ne in chaumbre,
 Ther that wise men were; · (witness of godes wordes),
 Nother a mys-proud man · among lordes be a-lowed. 96
 Clerkus and knyghtes · welcometh kynges mynstrales,
 And for loue of here lordes · litten hem at festes;
 Muche more, me thenketh · riche men auhte
 Haue beggers by-fore hem · whiche beth godes mynstrales, 100
 As he seith hym-self · seynt Iohan bereth witness,
 Qui uos spernit, me etiam spernit.
 Ther-for ich rede þow riche · reueles when þe maken
 For to solace þoure soules · suche mynstrales to haue;
 The poure for a fol sage · syttinge at thy table, 104
 With a lered man, to lere the · what oure lord suffrede
 For to sauy thy saule · fram Satan thyn enemye,
 And fithle the, with-oute flateryng · of goode Fryday the geste,
 And a blynde man for a bordiour · other a bedreden womman,
 To crye a largesse by-fore oure lorde · þoure goode loos to shewe.
 Thuse thre manere mynstrales · maken a man to lauhe; 110
 In hus deth-deynge · thei don hym gret comfort,
 That by hus lyue litheth hem · and loueth hem to huyre. 112
 Thuse solaceth the soule · til hym-self be-falle
 In a wel good hope, for he wroghte so · a-mong worthy seyntes;
 Ther flaterers and foles · with here foule wordes
 Leden tho that litten hem · to Luciferes feste, 116
 With *turpiloquio*, a lay of sorwe · and Lucifers fithle,
 To perpetual peyne · other purgatorye as wykke.]

From
 C. viii.
 86-118.

B. 430. flateres L. 437-454. *These lines in R only; but found in C-text.*
 454. gode; R om. for—so; R om; but cf. C-text. 455. flateres (for fla-
 tereres) LR.

PASSUS XIV (DO-WEL VI).

Passus xiiij^m.

‘ I HAUE but one hool hatere,’ quod Haukyn · ‘ I am the lasse
to blame

Though it be soiled and selde clene · I slepe there-inne on niztes ;
And also I haue an houswyf · hewen and children—

Vxorem duxy, et ideo non possum venire—

That wolen bymolen it many tyme · maugre my chekes ! 4

It hath ben laued in lente · and oute of lente bothe,

With the sope of sykenesse · that seketh wonder depe,

And with the losse of catel · loth forto agulte

God or any gode man · bi auzte that I wiste ; 8

And was shryuen of the preste · that gaue me, for my synnes,

To penaunce pacyence · and pore men to fede,

Al for coueitise of my Crystenedome · in clenness to kepen it.

And couthe I neuere, by Cryste · kepen it clene an houre, 12

That I ne soiled it with syzte · or sum ydel speche,

Or thorough werke or thorough worde · or wille of myn herte,

That I ne fober it foule · fro morwe tyl eue.’

‘ And I shal kenne the,’ quod Conscience · ‘ of contricioun to
make, 16

That shal clawe thi cote · of alkynnes filthe,

Cordis contricio, etc. : —

Dowel shal wasshen it and wryngen it · thorw a wys confessour,

Oris confessio, etc. : —

Dobet shal beten it and bouken it · as brizte as any scarlet,

And engreynen it with good wille · and goddes grace to amende the,

And sithen sende the to satisfaccioun · for to sowen it after,

Satisfaccio dobest.

Shal neuere myste bimolen it · ne moth after biten it,

Ne fende ne false man · defoulen it in thi lyue ;

Shall none heraude ne harpoure · haue a fairere garnement 24

Than Haukyn the actyf man · and thou do by my techyng ;

Ne no mynstral be more worth · amonges pore and riche,

Than Haukynnes wyf the wafrere · with his *actiua-vita*.’

•

**‘Pees!’ quath Pacience · ‘ich praye the, syre Actyf!
For thauh neuere payn ne plough · ne potage were,**

‘And I shal purueye the paste,’ quod Pacyence · ‘though no
plow erie, 28

And floure to fede folke with · as best be for the soule,

Though neuere greyne growed · ne grape vppon vyne.

Alle that lyueth and loketh · lyflode wolde I fynde,

And that ynough shal none faille · of thinge that hem nedeth.

We shulde nouzt be to busy · a-bouten owre lyflode, 33

*Ne solliciti sitis, etc. : volucres celi deus pascit, etc. : patientes
vincunt, etc.’*

Thanne laughed Haukyn a litel · and liztly gan swerye,

‘Who so leueth 3ow, by owre lorde · I leue nouzte he be
blissed!’

‘No,’ quod Pacyence paciently · and out of his poke hente 36

Vitailles of grete vertues · for al manere bestes,

And seyde, ‘lo! here lyflode ynough · if owre byleue be trewe!

For lente neuere was lyf · but lyflode were shapen,

Wher-of or wherfore · or where-by to lybbe. 40

Firste the wylde worme · vnder weet erthe,

Fissch to lyue in the flode · and in the fyre the crykat,

The corlue by kynde of the eyre · moste clenest flessch of
bryddes,

And bestes by grasse and by greyne · and by grene rotis, 44

In menynges that alle men · myzte the same

Lyue thorw lele byleue · and loue, as god witnesseth;

*Quodcumque pecieritis a patre in nomine meo, etc. : et
alibi,*

*Non in solo pane viuit homo, set in omni verbo, quod pro-
cedit de ore dei.’*

But I loked what lyflode it was · that Pacience so preysed,

And thanne was it a pece of the *pater-noster* · *fiat voluntas tua.*

‘Haue, Haukyn!’ quod Pacyence · ‘and ete this whan the
hungreth, 49

Or whan thou clomsest for colde · or clyngest for drye.

Shal neuere gyues the greue · ne grete lordes wrath,

Prisone ne peyne · for—*patientes vincunt.* 52

Bi so that thou be sobre · of syzte and of tonge,

In etynges and in handlynges · and in alle thi fyue wittis,

Darstow neuere care for corne · ne linnen cloth ne wollen,

Ne for drynke, ne deth drede · but deye as god lyketh, 56

Or thorw hunger or thorw hete · at his wille be it;

Prude wolde putte hym-self forth · thauh no plouh eryl. 236
 Hit am ich that fynde alle folke · and fram hunger saue,
 Thorgh the heye helpe of hym · that me hyder sente,

And seide, 'lo, here lyf-lode ynowe · yf oure by-leyue be trewe.
 For lent was ther neuere lyf · bote lyflode were yshape, 240
 Wher-of othere wherfore · and wher-with to lyuen.

The worme that woneth vnder erthe · and in water fisshes,
 The crykett by kynde of fur · and corlew by the wynde,
 Bestes by gras and by greyn · and by grene rotes. 244
 In menyngre that alle men · myghte the same
 Lyuen thorgh lell by-leyue · as oure lord wittnesseth,

*Quodcunque petieritis patrem in nomine meo, dabitur enim
 uobis; et alibi:*

*Non in solo pane uiuit homo, sed de omni verbo, quod pro-
 cedit de ore dei.'*

'Hast thou ay,' quath Actyf · 'suche mete with the?'
 'ȝe,' quath Pacience, and hente · out of hus poke 248
 A pece of the pater-noster · and profrede to vs alle.

And ich lustnede, and lokede · what lyflode hit were;
 Thanne was hit *fiat-uoluntas-tua* · that sholde fynde vs alle.
 'Haue, Actyf,' quath Pacience · 'and eet this when the hungreth,
 Other whenne thou clomsest for colde · other clyngest for
 drouthe; 253

And shal neuere gyues the greue · ne grete lordes wratthe,
 Pryson ne other payne · for—*pacientes uincunt*;
 By so thou be sobre · of syght, and of tounge bothe, 256
 In ondyng, in handlyng · in alle thy fyue wittes,
 That thou care for no corn · for cloth ne for drynke,
 Ne deth drede, ne deuel · deye as god lyketh, 259
 Whether thorw hunger other thorw hete · at hus wil be hit!

C. 244. greyn (*for* greyn) P. 249. pece ITMFSE; pice P.

For if thou lyuest after his lore · the shorter lyf the better
Si quis amat Cristum · mundum non diligit istum.

For thorw his breth bestes wexen · and abrode ȝeden,

Dixit et facta sunt, etc. :

Ergo thorw his breth mowen · men and bestes lyuen, 61

As holywrit witnesseth · whan men segge her graces,

Aperis tu manum tuam, et imples omne animal benediccione.

It is founden that fourty wynter · folke lyued with-uten tulyinge,
 And oute of the flynte spronge the flode · that folke and bestes
 dronke. 64

And in Elyes tyme · heuene was yclosed,

That no reyne ne rone; · thus rede men in bokes,

That many wyntres men lyueden · and no mete ne tulyeden.

Seuene slepe, as seith the boke · seuene hundreth wynter, 68

And lyueden with-oute lyflode · and atte laste thei woken,

And if men lyued as mesure wolde · shulde neuere more be
 defaute

Amonges Cristene creatures · if Crystes wordes ben trewe.

Ac vnkyndnesse *caristia* maketh · amonges Crystene peple, 72

And ouer-plente maketh pruyde · amonges pore and riche;

Ac mesure is so moche worth · it may nouȝte be to dere,

For the meschief and the meschaunce · amonges men of Sodome

Wex thorw plente of payn · and of pure sleuthe; 76

*Ociositas et habundancia panis peccatum turpissimum
 nutriuit.*

For thei mesured nouȝt hem-self · of that thei ete and dronke,
 Diden dedly synne · that the deuel lyked,

So vengeance fel vpon hem · for her vyle synnes;

Thei sonken in-to helle · tho citees vchone. 80

For-thi mesure we vs wel · and make owre faithe owre schel-
 troun,

And thorw faith cometh contricioun · conscience wote wel,

Whiche dryueth away dedly synne · and doth it to be venial.

And though a man myȝte nouȝte speke · contricioun myȝte hym
 saue, 84

And brynge his soule to blisse · by so that feith bere witnesse,

That, whiles he lyued, he bileued · in the lore of holy-cherche;

Ergo contricioun, feith, and conscience · is kyndelich Dowel,

For yf thow lyuest after hus lore · the shorter lyf the betere ;
Si quis amat Christum · mundum non diligit istum,
Sed quasi felorem · spernes illius amorem.

Thorgh hus breth bestes woxen · and a-brode ȝeden; 264
Dixit et facta sunt.

Ergo thorw hus breth bestes lyuen · bothe men and fisshes,
 As wytnesseth holy wryte · when we seyn oure graces,
Aperis tu manum tuam, et imples omne animal benedictione.
 Hit is founde that fourty wynter · folke leueden and nouht tyledede,
 And out of flent sprange the flod · that folke and bestes dronken.

And in Elyes time · heuene was yclosed, 269
 That no reyne reynede · thus redeth men in bookes,
 That menye wynter men lyueden · and of no mete telden.
 Seuene slepen, as seith the book · more than syxty wynter, 272
 Lyueden with-outen lyflode · and at the laste a-wakeden.
 And yf men lyueden as mesure wolde · sholde neuere be defaute
 Among Crysten creatures · yf Crystes worde be trewe ;
Dabo tibi secundum petitionem tuam.'

[See note on p. 403.]

C. 263. *This line is in E only.* 266. breth ITS; PEM om. 267. P repeats that. 268. P om. the. 272. slepen IMF; slupen PE. a (for as) P. 273. Leueden P; see l. 274. 275. trywe P.

And surgienes for dedly synnes · whan shrifte of mouth failleth.

Ac shrifte of mouth more worthy is · if man be inliche contrit ;
For shrifte of mouth sleeth synne · be it neuere so dedly ; 90

Per confessionem to a prest · *peccata occiduntur*,

There contricioun doth but dryueth it doun · in-to a venial synne,
As Daud seith in the sauter · *et quorum lecta sunt peccata.*

Ac satisfaccioun seketh oute the rote · and bothe sleeth and
voideth,

And, as it neuere had ybe · to nouȝt bryngeth dedly synne,
That it neuere eft is seen, ne sore · but semeth a wounde yheled.'

'Where woneth Charite?' quod Haukyn · 'I wiste neuere
in my lyue 97

Man that with hym spake · as wyde as I haue passed!'

'There parfit treuthe and pouere herte is · and pacience
of tonge,

There is Charitee, the chief chaumbrere · for god hymselfe!'

'Whether paciente pouerte,' quod Haukyn · 'be more
plesaunte to owre driȝte 101

Than ricchesse riȝtfulliche ywonne · and resonablelich yspended?'

'ȝe,' *quis est ille?* quod Pacience · 'quik *laudabimus eum!*

Though men rede of richchesse · riȝt to the worldes ende, 104

I wist neuere renke that riche was · that whan he rekne sholde,

Whan it drow to his deth-day · that he ne dred hym sore,

And that atte rekenyng in arrerage fel · rather than oute of dette.

There the pore dar plede · and preue by pure resoun, 108

To haue allowaunce of his lorde · by the lawe he it cleymeth,

Ioye that neuere Ioye hadde · of riȝtful Iugge he axeth,

And seith, "lo! briddes and bestes · that no blisse ne knoweth,

And wilde wormes in wodes · thorw wyntres thow hem greuest,

And makest hem welnyegh meke · and mylde for defaute, 113

And after thow sendest hem somer · that is her souereigne Ioye,

And blisse to alle that ben · bothe wilde and tame.

Thanne may beggeres, as bestes · after bote waiten, 116

That al her lyf han lyued · in langour and in defaute.

But god sent hem some tyme · some manere Ioye,

Other here or elles where · kynde wolde it neuere;

For to wrotherhele was he wrouȝte · that neuere was Ioye shaped.

Angeles that in helle now ben · hadden Ioye some tyme, 121

'What is parfit Pacience?' · quath *Activa uita*. 276
 'Meeknesse and mylde speche · and men of on wil,
 The whiche wil loue ledeth · to oure lordes place;
 And that is Charite, chaumpion · chief of alle vertues,
 And that is poure pacient · alle perilis to suffre." 280
 'Where pouerte and pacience · plesse more god almyghty
 Than do ryghtful richesse · and resonably to spende?'
 'Ȝe, *quis est ille?*' quath Pacience · 'quyk *laudabimus eum!*
 Thauh men rede of riche · ryght to the worldes ende, 284
 I wist neuere renke that riche was · that whan he rekne sholde,
 And whan he drouh hym to the deth · that he ne dradde hym
 sarrer
 Than eny poure pacient · and that preoue ich by reyson. 287
 Hit are bote fewe folke of these riche · that ne falleth in arerage,
 Thar the poure dar plede · and preoue by pure reysoune
 To haue a-lowaunce of hus lorde; · by lawe he cleymeth Ioye,
 That neuere Ioye hadde · of rightful Iuge he asketh; 291
 And seith, "lo, briddes and bestes · that no blisse knoweth,
 And wilde wormes in wodes · thorw wynter thow hem greuest,
 And makest hem wel ney meek · and mylde for defaute;
 After than thow sendest hem somere · that is here souereyn Ioye,
 And blisse to alle that been · bothe wilde and tame. 296
 Then may beggers, as bestes · after blysse asken,
 That al here lif hauen lyued · in langour and defaute."
 Bote god sende hem som tyme · of som manner Ioye,
 Other heer other elles-wher · elles were it reuthe; 300
 For to wrother-hele was he wrouȝt · that neuere was Ioye yshape.
 Angeles that in helle now been · hadden som tyme Ioye,

C. 285. *This line is supplied from the B-text, to complete the sense; all the C-text MSS. omit it.* 288. thees P. arirage P. 289. dar IMFSET; der P.
 291. rightful IFST; ryght PE. 294. ney E; nei or ner P. 295. seyn-
 dest P; see l. 299. here IST; hem P. 296. P om. that. 297. as ME;
 and PST. 299. sum (1st time) T; PEMFS om. 301. wrouȝth P.

And *Diues* in deyntees lyued · and in *douce vye* ;
 Rizte so resoun sheweth · that tho men that were riche,
 And her makes also lyued · her lyf in murthe. 124

Ac god is of a wonder wille · by that kynde witte sheweth,
 To 3iue many men his mercymonye · ar he it haue deserued.
 Rizt so fareth god by some riche · reuthe me it thinketh,
 For thei han her hyre here · an heuene as it were, 128
 And is gret lykyng to lyue · with-oute laboure of body;
 And when he deyeth, ben disallowed · as Daudid seith in the sauter,
Dormierunt, et nichil inuenerunt ;

And in an other stede also · *velud sompnum surgencium,*
domine, in ciuitate tua, et ad nichilum rediges.

Allas! that ricchesse shal reue · and robbe mannes soule 132
 Fram the loue of owre lorde · at his laste ende!
 Hewen that han her hyre afore · aren euermore nedy,
 And selden deieth he out of dette · that dyneth ar he deserue it,
 And til he haue done his deuor · and his dayes iourne. 136
 For whan a werkman hath wrouzte · thanne may men se the sothe,
 What he were worthi for his werke · and what he hath deserued ;
 And nouzt to fonge bifore · for drede of disallowynge.
 So I segge by 3ow riche · it semeth nouzt that 3e shulle 140
 Haue heuene in 3owre here-beyng · and heuene her-after;
 Rizt as a seruaunt taketh his salarye bifore · and sith wolde clayme
 more,

As he that none hadde · and hath huyre atte laste.
 It may nouzt be, 3e riche men · or Matheu on god lyeth; 144
De delicijs ad delicias, difficile est transire.

Ac if ye riche haue reuthe · and rewarde wel the pore,
 And lyuen as lawe techeth · done leute to alle,
 Criste of his curteysie · shal conforte 3ow atte laste,
 And rewarde alle dowble ricchesse · that reuful hertes habbeth.
 And as an hyne that hadde his hyre · ar he bygonne, 149
 And whan he hath done his deuor wel · men doth hym other bounte,
 3yueth hym a cote aboue his couenaunte · rizte so Cryst 3iueh
 heueue

Bothe to riche and to nouzte riche · that rewfullich lybbeth; 152
 And alle that done her deuor wel · han dowble hyre for her
 trauaille,

Here for3yuenesse of her synnes · and heuene blisse after.

And *Dives* in his deyntes lyuede · and in *douce uye* ;
 And now he buyeth hit ful bitere · he is a beggere of helle.

Many man hath hus Ioye here · for alle here wel dedes, 305
 And lordes and ladyes ben callid · for leodes that thay haue,
 And slepith, as hit semeth · and somere euere hem foleweth ;
 Whan deth a-waketh hem of here wele · that were here so ryche,
 Than aren hit pure poure thynges · in purgatorie other in helle !
 Dauid in the sauter · of suche maketh mynde, 310

And seith, *dormierunt sompnum suum ; et nichil inuenerunt
 omnes uiri diuiciarum in manibus suis ;
 Et alibi : Velut sompnum surgencium, et cel.*

Hic explicit passus sextus de Dowel.

PASSUS XVII. (DO-WEL VII.)

Incipit passus septimus.

ALAS ! that Richesse shall reue · and robbe mannes soule
 Fro the loue of oure lorde · at hus laste ende !
 Thei that haue hure hyre by-fore · aren eueremore poure,
 And shulle nat deye out of dette · to dyne er they deseruen hit.
 When here deuer is don · and his daies iourne, 5
 Then may men wite what he is worth · and what he hath
 deserued ;
 And nouht to fonge by-fore · for drede of disalouwynge.
 So ich say by 3ow riche · hit semeth nat 3e shulle 8
 Haue two heuenes · for 3oure her-beynge.

C. 303. lyuede TS ; lyuyng P. 306. an (*for and*) P. 309. haren P.
 310. shuche P. *sompnum suum* F (*only*). *in—suis* E (*only*).

Passus XVII. 1. richesse EMF ; riche P. 2. Fro ETF ; For PM.
 6. white (*for wite*) P. deseruede P.

Ac it nys but selde yseyn · as by holy seyntes bokes,
 That god rewarded double reste · to any riche wye. 156
 For moche murthe is amonges riche · as in mete and clothyng,
 And moche murthe in Maye is · amonges wilde bestes,
 And so forth whil somer lasteth · her solace dureth.
 Ac beggeres aboute Midsomer · bredlees thei soupe, 160
 And ȝit is wynter for hem worse · for wete-shodde thei gange,
 A-fyrst sore and afyngred · and foule yrebuked,
 And arated of riche men · that reuthe is to here.
 Now, lorde, sende hem somer · and some manere loye, 164
 Heuene after her hennes-goyng · that here han suche defaute!
 For alle myȝtest thou haue made · none mener than other,
 And yliche witty and wyse · if the wel hadde lyked.
 And haue reuthe on thise riche men · that rewarde nouȝte thi
 prisoneres; 168

Of the good that thou hem gyuest · *ingrati* ben manye;
 Ac, god, of thi goodnesse · gyue hem grace to amende.
 For may no derth ben hem dere · drouth, ne weet,
 Ne noyther hete ne haille · haue thei here hele, 172
 Of that thei wilne and wolde · wanteth hem nouȝt here.

Ac pore peple, thi prisoneres · lorde, in the put of myschief,
 Conforte tho creatures · that moche care suffren
 Thorw derth, thorw drouth · alle her dayes here, 176
 Wo in wynter tymes · for wantyng of clothes,
 And in somer tyme selde · soupn to the fulle;
 Comforte thi careful · Cryst, in thi ryche,
 For how thou confortest alle creatures · clerkes bereth witnesse,
Conuertimini ad me, et salui eritis:

Thus, *in genere* of his gentrice · Iesu Cryst seyde, 181
 To robberes and to reueres · to riche and to pore.
 Thou tauȝtest hem in the trinitee · to take baptesme,
 And be clene thorw that crystennynge · of alle kynnes synnes;
 And if vs fel thorw folye · to falle in synne after, 185
 Confessioun, and knowlechyng · and crauyng thi mercy
 Shulde amende vs as many sithes · as man wolde desire.
 Ac if the pouke wolde plede here-aȝeine · and punyssh vs in
 conscience, 188

B. 181. gentrice O; gentrise CB; gentries W; genitrice LR. 184. synnes
 RCO; synne WB; L *om.* 185. if WR; LCOB *om.* 186. knowleching
 CORB; knelechyng L. 188. pouke R; pope (l) LCWCOB; *see* l. 190.

Much myrthe is in May · a-monge wilde bestes,
 And so forth whil somer lasteth · heore solace dureth;
 And mucche myrthe a-monge riche men is · that han meoble
 ynow and heele. 12

Ac beggers a-boute Myd-somere · bredlees thei soupe,
 And ȝut is wynter for hem wors · for wet-shood thei gangen,
 A-furst and a-fyngred · and foule rebuked
 Of these worlde-riche men · that reuthe hit is to huyre. 16
 Now, lord, send hem somer som-tyme · to solace and to Ioye,
 That al here lyf leden · in lowenesse and in pouerte!
 For alle myghtest thow haue maked · men of grete welthe,
 And liche witty and wys · and lyue with-oute neode; 20
 Ac for the beste, as ich hope · aren somme poure and some
 riche.

Ryght so haue reuthe of ous alle · that on the rode deydest,
 And amende ous of thy mercy · and make ous alle meeke,
 Louh and leel and louynge · and of herte poure; 24
 And send ous contricion · to clanse with oure soules,
 And confession, to culle · alle kynne synnes,
 And satisfaccion, the whiche fulfulleth · the fadres will of heuene.
 And these been Dowel and Dobet · and Dobest of alle; 28
Cordis contricio · cometh of sorwe in herte,
 And *oris confessio* · that cometh of shrifte of mouthe,
 And *operis satisfactio* · that for synnes payeth,
 And for alle synnes · soueraynliche quiteth. 32

Cordis contricio, oris confessio, operis satisfactio;
 These thre with-uten doute · tholen alle pouerte,
 And lereth lewed and lered · heh and louh to knowe,
 Ho that doth wel other bet · other best a-bouen alle;
 And holichurche and charite · here-of a chartere maden. 36

C. 11. forth ET; faith F; fort P. whil F; while ET; wil P. 13.
 Ac F; But T; And PE. 14. whetshood P. 16. thes P. wordle P.
 19. myghtes P. makede P. 20. and EFT; an P. 21. as ETF; P om.
 22. roude P. 23. P inserts al after of. 33. Thees P. whitouten P.

He shulde take the acquittance as quik · and to the qued schewe it,

Pateat, etc., per passionem domini,

And putten of so the pouke · and preuen vs vnder borwe.

Ac the perchemyn of this patent · of pouerte be moste,

And of pure pacience · and parfit bileue. 192

Of pompe and of pruyde · the parchemyn decorreth,

And principaliche of alle peple · but thei be pore of herte.

Ellis is al an ydel · al that euere we writen,

Pater-nostres and penaunce · and pilgrimage to Rome. 196

But owre spences and spendynge · sprynge of a trewe wille,

Elles is al owre laboure loste; · lol how men writeth

In fenestres atte freres · if fals be the foundement;

For-thi Crystene sholde ben in comune riche · none coueitouse

for hym-selue. 200

For seuene synnes that there ben · assaillen vs euere,

The fende folweth hem alle · and fondeth hem to helpe,

Ac with ricchesse that ribaude · rathest men bigyleth.

For there that richesse regneth · reuerence folweth, 204

And that is plesaunte to Pryde · in pore and in riche.

And the riche is reuerenced · by resoun of his richchesse,

There the pore is put bihynde · and par auenture can more

Of witte and of wysdom · that fer away is better 208

Than ricchesse or reaute · and rather yherde in heuene.

For the riche hath moche to rekene · and rizte softe walketh,

The heigh waye to-heuene-ward · oft ricchesse letteth,

Ita impossibile diuiti, etc.,

There the pore preseth bifor the riche · with a pakke at his rugge,

Opera enim illorum sequuntur illos.

Batauntliche, as beggeres done · and baldeliche he craueth, 212

For his pouerte and his pacience · a perpetuel blisse;

Beati pauperes, quoniam ipsorum est regnum celorum.

And Pryde in ricchesse regneth · rather than in pouerte,

Arst in the maister than in the man · some mansioun he hath.

Ac in pouerte there pacyence is · Pryde hath no myzte, 217

Ne none of the seuene synnes · sitten ne mowe there longe,

Ne haue powere in pouerte · if pacyence it folwe.

For the pore is ay prest · to plese the riche, 220

B. 197. wille WCO; welle LRB. 211. *impossibile* W; *possibile* LCROB.
212. *sequuntur* LCRB.

Bote these thre that ich spak of · on domes day vs defenden,
 Elles is in ydel · al oure lyuyng here,
 Oure preyers and oure penaunce · and pilgrimages to Rome.
 Bote oure spences and spending · sprynge of a trewe wille, 40
 Elles is al oure labour lost; · lo, how men wryten
 In fenestres at the freres · yf fals be the foundement!
 For-thi Cristene men scholde been in comun riche · no couetise
 to hym-selue.

For seuene synnes that ther been · that assailen ous euere,
 The fende folweth hem alle · and fondeth hem to helpe, 45
 And with richesse tho ribaundes · rathest men by-gylen;
 For ther that rychesse regneth · reuerences soleweth,
 And that is plesaunt to Pryude · in poure and in riche. 48
 The ryche is yreuerenced · by reson of his richesse,
 There the poure is yput by-hynde · and can parauntre more
 Of wit and of wysedome · that fer wey is bettere
 Than richesse other reaulte · and rather yhurde in heuene. 51
 For the ryche hath muche to rekene · and ryȝt softe walkith
 The heye wey to-heuene-warde; · he halt hit nat ful euene;
 There the poure presseth by-fore · with a pak at hus rygge,
Opera enim illorum sequuntur illos.

Batauntlyche, as beggers don · and boldeliche he craueth, 56
 For hus pouerte and pacience · perpetual Ioye.

Also Pryude in richesse regneth · rather than in pouerte;
 Other in the maister other in the man · som mancion he shewith.
 Ac in pouerte ther pacience is · Pryude hath no myȝte, 60
 Ne non of the seuene synnes · sitte ne may ther longe,
 Ne haue power in pouerte · yf pacience hit folewe.
 For the poure is ay prest · to plesse the riche,

C. 37. thes P. vs TF; P *om.* 38. lyuyng ET; leuyng PF. 40.
 trywe P. 49. is EFTG; P *om.* yreuerencede P. is (*for his*) P. 51. wit FG;
 witt E; whȝt P. fer EFT; feer P. 52. an (*for and*) P. 53. ryȝth P.
 55. whit P. *sequuntur* P. 60. myȝhte P. 61. ne may EF; may T;
 no man (!) P. 63. prest EFTG; preest P.

And buxome at his byddyng · for his broke loues;
 And buxomenesse and boste · aren euer-more at werre,
 And ayther hateth other · in alle manere werkes.

If Wratthe wrastel with the pore · he hath the worse ende;
 For if they bothe pleyne · the pore is but fieble, 225
 And if he chyde or chatre · hym chieueth the worse;
 For loulich he loketh · and loueliche is his speche,
 That mete or mone · of other men mote asken. 228

And if Glotonie greue pouerte · he gadereth the lasse,
 For his rentes ne wol nauzte reche · no riche metes to bugge;
 And thouȝ his glotonye be to gode ale · he goth to cold beddyng,
 And his heued vn-heled · vn-esiliche i-wrye; 232
 For whan he streyneth hym to streche · the strawe is his schetes;
 So for his glotonie and his grete sleuthe · he hath a greuous
 penaunce,

That is welawo whan he waketh · and wepeth for colde,
 And sum tyme for his synnes · so he is neuere murie, 236
 Withoute mornyng amonge · and mischief to bote.

And if Coueitise wolde cacche the pore · thei may nouȝt come
 togideres,

And by the nekke namely · her none may hente other.
 For men knoweth wel that Coueitise · is of a kene wille, 240
 And hath hondes and armes · of a longe lengthe.
 And pouerte nis but a petit thinge · appereth nouȝt to his nauele,
 And louely layke was it neuere · bitwene the longe and the
 shorte.

And though Auarice wolde angre the pore · he hath but litel
 myȝte, 244

For pouerte hath but pokes · to putten in his godis,
 There Auarice hath almaries · and yren-bounde coffres;
 And whether be lizter to breke? · lasse boste it maketh,
 A beggeres bagge · than an yren-bounde coffre! 248

Lecherye loueth hym nouȝt · for he ȝeueth but lytel syluer,
 Ne doth hym nouȝte dyne delycatly · ne drynke wyn oft.
 A strawe for the stuwes! · it stode nouȝt, I trowe,
 Had thei no thyng but of pore men · her houses were vntyled!
 And though Sleuthe suwe pouerte · and serue nouȝt god to paye,

B. 227-237. *These lines are in R only.* 242. nauele WCR; naule L.
 252. no thyng WCOB; none L. *For vntyled, O has vniled (perhaps better).*

And buxume at his biddyng · for hus breed and drynke; 64
 And buxumnesse and bost · aren euere-more at wratthe,
 And ayther hateth other · and mowen nat dwelle to-gederes.

Yf Wratthe wraxle with the poure · he hath the worsse ende;
 For yf thei bothe pleyne · the poure is bote fyble, 68
 And yf he childe other chatere · hym chyuyth the worsse.
 For loueliche he lokyth · and louh is hus speche,
 That mete other moneye · of straunge men mote begge.

And yf Gloteny greue pouerte · he gadereth the lasse, 72
 For hus rentes wol nat reche · ryche metes to bigge;
 Thauh hus gloteny be of good ale · he goth to a cold beddyng,
 And hus heued vn-heled · vneisyliche ywrye;
 For when he streyneth hym to strecche · the straw is hus whitel; 76
 So for hus glotonye and grete synne · he hath a greuous penaunce,

That is weylawey whan he awaketh · and wepeth for colde;
 So is he neuere more ful murye · so meschief hym folweth.

Thaugh Couetyce wolde with the poure wraxle · thei mai nat
 come to-gederis, 80
 By the necke nameliche · her neither may henten other.
 For men knoweth that Couetise · is of ful kene wil,
 And hath hondes and armes · of a long lengthe,
 And pouerte is a pety thyng · apereth nat to hus nauele; 84
 A loueliche laik was hit neuere · by-twyne a long and a short.

Thauh Auarice wolde angrye pouerte · he hath bote lytel myzte;
 For pouerte hath bote pokes · to putten yn hus goodes,
 Ther Auarice hath almaries · and yre-bounden cofres. 88
 And whether be betere to breke · lasse boost hit maketh,
 To breke a beggers bagge · than an yre-bounden cofre?

Lecherye loueth none poure · for he hath bote lytel seluer,
 Ne doth men dyne dylicatliche · neyther drynk wyne ofte. 92
 A straw for the stywes! · hy stod nat ful longe
 And thay hadde non other haunt · bote of poure peple!

Thauh Slewthe suwe pouerte · and serue nat god to paye,

C. 64. is (*for* his) P. 68. pleyne FT; pleyn E; pleyen P. his (*for*
 is P. 80. whit (*for* with) P. 86, 88. auerice P. myzthe P. 88.
 an (*for* and) P.

Mischief is his maister · and maketh hym to thynke, 254
 That god is his grettest helpe · and no gome elles,
 And his seruaunt, as he seith · and of his sute bothe. 256
 And where he be or be nouzte · he bereth the signe of pouerte,
 And in that secte owre saueoure · saued al mankynde.
 For-thi al pore that paciente is · may claymen and asken
 After her endynge here · heuene-riche blisse. 260
 Moche hardier may he axen · that here myzte haue his wille
 In londe and in lordship · and likynge of bodye,
 And for goddis loue leueth al · and lyueth as a beggere;
 And as a mayde for mannes loue · her moder forsaketh, 264
 Hir fader and alle her frendes · and solweth hir make,

Moche is suche a mayde to louie · of hym that such one taketh,
 More than a mayden is · that is married thorw brokage, 267
 As bi assent of sondry partyes · and syluer to bote,
 More for coueitise of good · than kynde loue of bothe;—
 So it fareth bi eche a persone · that possessioun forsaketh, 270
 And put hym to be pacient · and pouerte weddeth,
 The which is sybbe to god hym-self · and so to his seyntes.
 ‘Haue god my trouthe,’ quod Haukyn · ‘3e preyse faste Pouerte;
 What is Pouerte with pacience,’ quod he · ‘propely to mene?’

‘*Paupertas,*’ quod Pacience · ‘*est odibile bonum,*
Remocio curarum, possessio sine calumpnia, donum dei,
sanitatis mater;
Absque solitudine semita, sapientie temperatrix, negocium
sine dampno;
Incerta fortuna, absque solitudine felicitas.’

‘I can nouzt construe al this,’ quod Haukyn · ‘3e moste kenne
 me this on Englisch.’ 276
 ‘In Englisch,’ quod Pacyence, ‘it is wel harde · wel to expounen;
 Ac somdel I shal seyne it · by so thow vnderstonde.

(1) Pouerte is the first poynte · that Pryde moste hateth,
 Thanne is it good by good skil · al that agasteth Pryde. 280

Meschief is ay a mene · and maketh hym to thenke, 96
 That god is hus grettest help · and no gome elles,
 And he is seruaunt al-way, he seith · and of hus secte bothe.
 And whether he be other be nat · he berith the sygne of pouerte,
 And in that secte oure sauour · sauede al mankynde. 100
 For-thi alle poure that pacient is · of pure ryght may cleyme
 After here endyng heere · heuene-riche blysse.

Much hardyloker may he aske · that her may haue hus will
 In londe and in lordshepes · and lykyng of body, 104
 And for goddes loue leueth al · and lyueth as a beggere.
 As a mayde for a mannes loue · here moder for-saketh,
 Hure fader and hure frendes · and gooth forth with hure para-
 mour;

Muche is suche a mayde to loue · of a man that suche on taketh
 More than that maide is · that is ymarried by brocage, 109
 As by asent of sondry bodyes · and seluer to bote,
 More for couetice of catel · than kynde loue of the mariage.
 So hit farith by ech a persone · that possession forsaketh, 112
 And putteth hym to be pacient · and to pouerte hym weddeth,
 The whyche is sibbe to Cryst self · and semblable bothe.'

Quath Actyf tho al angryliche · and argueynge as hit were,
 'What is Pouerte pacient?' quath he · 'ich praye that thou
 telle hit.' 116

'*Paupertas*,' quath Pacience · '*est odibile bonum,*
Remocio curarum, possessio sine calumpnia, donum dei,
sanitatis mater ;
Absque solitudine semita, sapientie temperatrix, negocium
sine dampno ;
Incerta fortuna, absque solitudine felicitas.'

'Ich can nat construen al this' · quath *Activa-wita*.
 'Parfay,' quath Pacience · 'proprelliche to telle
 In English, hit is ful harde · ac somdel ich shal telle the. 120

DISTINCTIO PAUPERTATIS.

(1) Pouerte is the firste poynte · that Pruyde most hateth ;
 "Thanne is pouerte good," quath Good Skyle · "thauh hit greue a
 lytel,

C. 97. god is EFTG ; good (*om.* is) P. 101. pure FG ; pur T ; poure
 PE (*by confusion*). 102. Affter P. 104. lonnde P. 105. goddes EFT ;
 godes G ; goodes P. 108. *of—taketh* EFG ; P *repeats* here moder for-saketh.

Rigte as contricioun is comfortable thinge · conscience wote
wel,

And a sorwe of hym-self · and a solace to the sowle,
So pouerte propreliche · penaunce, and ioye,
Is to the body · pure spiritual helthe, 284

Ergo paupertas est odibile bonum,

And contricioun confort · and *cura animarum*.

(2) Selde sit pouerte · the sothe to declare,
Or as Iustyce to Iugge men · enioigned is no pore,
Ne to be a maire aboue men · ne mynystre vnder kynges;
Selden is any pore yput · to punysshyn any peple; 289

Remocio curarum.

Ergo pouerte and pore men · perforen the comaundement,

Nolite iudicare quemquam. The thridde:—

(3) Selde is any pore riche · but of ríhtful heritage;
Wynneth he nauzt with weghtes fals · ne with vnseled mesures,
Ne borweth of his neghbores · but that he may wel paye, 293

Possessio sine calumpnia.

(4) The fierthe is a fortune · that florissbeth the soule
Wyth sobrete fram al synne · and also 3it more;
It affaiteth the flesshe · fram folyes ful manye, 296
A collateral conforte · Crystes owne 3ifte,

Donum dei.

(5) The fyfte is moder of helthe · a frende in alle fondynges,
And for the land euere a leche · a lemman of al clenness,

Sanitatis mater.

(6) The sexte is a path of pees · 3e, thorw the pas of Altoun
Pouerte myzte passe · with-oute peril of robbynge, 301
For there that pouerte passeth · pees folweth after,
And euere the lasse that he bereth · the hardyer he is of herte;
For-thi seith Seneca · *paupertas est absque solitudine semita*,
And an hardy man of herte · amonge an hepe of theues;

Cantabit pauper coram latrone viator.

(7) The seueneth is welle of wisdom · and fewe wordes sheweth,
For lordes alloweth hym litel · or lysteneth to his reson, 307
He tempreth the tonge to-treuthe-ward · and no tresore coueiteth;

Sapiencie temperatrix.

B. 286. sit WR; sitte LCO.
title to the next paragraph.

290. The words The thridde are only a
305. pauper O; paupertas LWCRB (badly).

Al that may putten of Pruyde · in place ther he regneth."

Remocio curarum :—

(2) For selde sitt pouerte · the sothe to declare; 124

As a Iustice to Iuge men · men enioyneth ther-to no poure,

Ne to be a mayre ouere men · ne mynistre vnder kynges.

Selde is the poure yput · to punysshe eny peuple,

Ergo pouerte and poure men · parfournen the comaundement,

Nolite iudicare quemquam.

Possessio sine calumpnia :—

(3) Selde is the poure ryght riche · bote of hus riztful heritage,

He wynneth nat with wyghtes fals · ne with vnseled mesures,

Ne borweth of his neyghebore · bote that he may wel paye,

And lyghtly men leneth to fewe men · and men wene hym poure.

(4) The feorthe is a fortune · that florissith the soule 133

With sobrete from alle synnes · and al-so 3ut more;

Hit defendeth the flessch · fro folyes ful menye:

And a collateral confort · Crystes owen sonde; 136

Donum dei.

(5) 3ut hit is moder of myzt · and of mannes helthe,

And frende in alle fondynges · and of foule vueles leche,

Sanitatis mater.

(6) The syxte, hit is a path of pees · 3e, thorw the pas of Altoun

Pouerte myghte passe · with-oute peril of robbynge. 140

For ther as pouerte passeth · pees folweth commenliche,

And euere the lasse that eny lyf ledeth · the lyghter hus herte
is there,

As he that wot neuere with wham · in nyghtes to mete;

Paupertas est sine solitudine semita : *Seneca.*

(7) The seuethe, hit is a welle of wysedome · and fewe wordes
sheweth, 144

For lordes aloweth hym lytel · other leyth ere to hus reison;e;

He tempreth hus tonge to-treuthe-ward · that no tresour coueyteth;

Sapiencie temperatrix.

C. 124. selde EG; seilde P. 127. Selde ETG; Seilde P. yput TG;
I-put F; pitt P; see l. 50. 129. Selde ETG; Seilde P. riztful FT; ryght
PE. 130. whyghtes P. 131. is (for his) P. 132. lyghly (by mistake) P.
wene EFTG; P om. 134. from FT; a3en E; whith P. 135. defendeth
FET; defendit P. 137. my3th P. altoun EF; haultone P.
143. ny3tes E; ny3tes tyme T; myghtes P. 144. weelle P.

(8) The eigteþ is a lele laborere · and loth to take more
 Than he may wel deserue · in somer or in wynter, 310
 And if he chaffareth, he chargeth no losse · mowe he charite
 wyne ;

Negocium sine dampno.

(9) The nyneth is swete to the soule · no sugre is swettere ;
 For pacyence is payn · for pouerte hym-selue, 313
 And sobrete swete drynke · and good leche in sykenesse,
 Thus lered me a lettred man · for owre lordes loue,
 Seynt Austyn, a blissed lyf · with-uten bysynesse, 316
 For body and for soule · *absque solitudine felicitas.*
 Now god, that al good gyueth · graunt his soule reste,
 That thus fyrst wrote to wyssen men · what Pouerte was to mene !'
 'Allas !' quod Haukyn the actyf man tho · 'that, after my
 Crystendome, 320

I ne hadde ben den and doluen · for Doweles sake !
 So harde it is,' quod Haukyn · 'to lyue and to do synne.
 Synne suweth vs euere,' quod he · and sori gan wexe,
 And wepte water with his eyghen · and weyled the tyme, 324
 That euere he dede dede · that dere god displesed ;
 Swowed and sobbed · and syked ful ofte,
 That euere he hadde londe or lordship · lasse other more,
 Or maystrye ouer any man · mo than of hym-self. 328
 'I were nouzt worthy, wote god,' quod Haukyn · 'to were any
 clothes,

Ne noyther sherte ne shone · saue for shame one,
 To keure my caroigne,' quod he · and cryde mercye faste,
 And wepte and weyled · and there-with I awaked. 332

(8) The eyhtethe, hit is a leel labour · and loth to take more .
 Than he may sothliche deserue · in somer other in wynter; 148
 And thauh he chaffare, he chargeth no los · mowe he charite
 wyne;

Negocium sine dampno.

(9) The nyethe, hit is swete to soules · is no suger swettere ;
 For pacience is hus paneter · and payn to pouerte fyndeth,
 And sobrete 3eueth here swete drynke · and solaceth here in
 alle angres. 152

Thus leryde me a lerede man · for oure lordes loue, seint Austyn,
 That pure pouerte and pacience · was a louh lyuyng in erthe,
 A blessid lyf with-oute busynesse · bote oneliche for the soule;

Absque solitudine felicitas.

Now god that al thyng gyueth · graunte hus saule reste, 156
 That wrot this to wisse men · what Pouerte was to mene !'

C. 150. (2nd) is T ; ther is F ; PEG om. 152. heere P (twice).

PASSUS XV (PROLOGUE TO DO-BET).

Passus xv^m : finit Dowel, et incipit Dobet.

AC after my wakyng · it was wonder longe,
 Ar I couth kyndely · knowe what was Dowel.
 And so my witte wex and wanyed · til I a fole were,
 And somme lakked my lyf · allowed it fewe, 4
 And leten me for a lorel · and loth to reuerencen
 Lordes or ladyes · or any lyf elles,
 As persones in pellure · with pendauntes of syluer;
 To seriauntz ne to suche · seyde nouzte ones, 8
 "God loke ȝow, lordes!" · ne louted faire;
 That folke helden me a fole · and in that folye I raved,
 Tyl Resoun hadde reuthe on me · and rokked me aslepe,
 Tyl I seigh, as it sorcerye were · a sotyl thinge with-al, 12
 One with-uten tonge and teeth · tolde me whyder I shulde,
 And wher-of I cam and of what kynde; · I coniured hym atte
 laste,
 If he were Crystes creature · for Crystes loue me to tellen.
 'I am Crystes creature,' quod he · 'and Crystene in many
 a place, 16
 In Crystes courte i-knowe wel · and of his kynne a partye.
 Is noyther Peter the porter · ne Poule with his fauchoune,
 That wil defende me the dore · dyngge ich neure so late.
 At mydnyȝt, at mydday · my voice so is yknowe, 20
 That eche a creature of his courte · welcometh me fayre.'
 'What ar ȝe called,' quod I, 'in that courte · amonges
 Crystes peple?'
 'The whiles I quykke the corps,' quod he · 'called am I *Anima*;
 And whan I wilne and wolde · *Animus* ich hatte; 24
 And for that I can and knowe · called am I *Mens*;
 And whan I make mone to god · *Memoria* is my name;
 And whan I deme domes · and do as treuthe techeth,

Thenne hadde Actyf a ledere · that heyhte *Liberum-arbitrium*,
 That knewe Conscience ful wel · and Clergie bothe;
 ‘He that hath londe and lordshep,’ quath he · ‘at the laste
 ende 160

Shal be pourest of power · at hus partyng hennes.’
 Thenne ich wondrede what he was · this *Liberum-arbitrium*,
 And prayede Pacience · that ich a-pose hym moste.
 And he suffrede me and seide · ‘assay hus other name.’ 164

‘Leue *Liberum-arbitrium*,’ quath ich · ‘of what londe ar ye?
 3if thow be Cristes creature · for Cristes loue, tel me.’

‘Ich am Cristes creature,’ quath he · ‘and Cristine in menye
 place,

And in Cristes court yknowe · and of hus kynne a partye; 168
 Is nother Peter the porter · ne Paul with his fauchon,
 That wolde defende me heuene dore · dyngge ich neuere so
 late.

At myd-nyzt, at mydday · my uoise is so yknowe,
 That eche creature that loueth Criste · welcometh me faire.’ 172

‘Wher-of serue 3e?’ ich seide · ‘syre *Liberum-arbitrium*?’
 ‘Of som tyme to fyghte,’ quath he · ‘falsnesse to destruye,
 And som tyme to suffre · bothe sorwe and teene,
 Layke other leue · at my lykyngge chese, 176
 To do wel other wikke · a wil with a reyson,
 And may nat be with-oute a body · to bere me wher hym
 lyketh.’

‘Thenne is that body bettere than thow,’ quath ich · ‘nay,’
 quath he, ‘no betere;

Bote as a wode were a fure · thenne worchen thei bothe, 180
 And ayther is otheres heete · and also of a wil;
 And so is man that hath hus mynde · myd *Liberum-arbitrium*.
 And the whyle ich quyke the cors · cald am ich *Anima*;
 And whenne ich wilne other wolde · *Animus* ich hyhte, 184
 And for that ich can and knowe · cald ich am “mannys Thouht;”
 And whan ich make mone to god · *Memoria* ich hatte;
 And when ich deme domes · and do as treuthe techeth,

C. 160. lonnde P. 162. thees (for this) P. 164. he MFTG; PE om.
 171. nyzt P. 172. wolcometh P. 177. wikke T; wicke EM; wike P.
 180. thei M; PEFTG om.; but it is well to keep it. 183. cors TG; cours P;
 corps M.

Thanne is *Racio* my riȝt name · Resoun an Englisshe ; 28
 And whan I fele that folke telleth · my firste name is *Sensus*,
 And that is wytte and wisdomē · the welle of alle craftes ;
 And whan I chalange or chalange nouȝte · chepe or refuse,
 Thanne am I Conscience ycalde · goddis clerke and his notarie ;
 And whan I loue lelly · owre lorde and alle other, 33

Thanne is lele Loue my name · and in Latyn *Amor* ;
 And whan I flye fro the flesshe · and forsake the caroigne,
 Thanne am I spirit specheles · and *Spiritus* thanne ich hatte.
 Austyn and Ysodorus · ayther of hem bothe 37
 Nempned me thus to name ; · now thow myȝte chese,
 How thow coueitest to calle me · now thow knowest alle my
 names.

*Anima pro diuersis actionibus diuersa nomina sortitur : dum
 uiuificat corpus, Anima est ; dum vult, Animus est ; dum
 scit, Mens est ; dum recolit, Memoria est. Dum iudicat,
 Racio est ; dum sentit, Sensus est ; dum amat, Amor est ;
 dum negat vel consentit, Consciencia est ; dum spirat,
 Spiritus est.'*

'ȝe ben as a bisshop,' quod I · al bourdyngē that tyme, 40
 'For bisshopes yblessed · thei bereth many names,
Presul and *pontifex* · and *metropolitanus*,
 And other names an hepe · *episcopus* and *pastor*.'

'That is soth,' seyde he · 'now I se thi wille ! 44
 Thow woldest knowe and kunne · the cause of alle her names,

And of myne, if thow myȝtest · me thinketh by thi speche !'
 'ȝe, syre,' I seyde · 'by so no man were greued,
 Alle the sciences vnder sonne · and alle the sotyle craftes 48
 I wolde I knewe and couth · kyndely in myne herte !'

'Thanne artow inparfit,' quod he · 'and one of Prydes knyȝtes ;

For such a luste and lykyngē · Lucifer fel fram heuene :

Ponam pedem meum in aquilone, et similis ero altissimo.

Then is *Racio* my ryhte name · “Reson” in Englissh; 188
 And whenne ich fele that folke telleth · my furste name is *Sensus*,
 And that is witte and wisdomē · the welle of alle craftes;
 And when ich chalange other nat chalange · chepe other refuse,
 Thanne am ich *Conscientia* cald · godes clerk and hus notarie;
 And when ich wol do other nat do · goode dedes other ille, 193
 Then am ich *Liberum-arbitrium* · as lettrede men tellen;
 And when ich loue leelly · oure lord and alle othere,
 Then is “leel Loue” my name · in Latyn that is *Amor*; 196
 And when ich flee fro the body · and feye leue the caroygne,
 Then am ich a spirit specheles · and *Spiritus* thenne ich hote.
 Austyn and Ysidorus · ayther of hem bothe
 Nempnede me this to name · thow now myght cheese 200
 How thow coueitest to calle me · now knowest thow alle myne
 names.

*Anima pro diuersis actionibus diuersa nomina sortitur;
 dum uiuificat corpus, Anima est. dum uult, Animus
 est; dum recolit, Memoria est; dum iudicat, Racio est;
 dum sentit, Sensus est; dum amat, Amor est; dum de-
 clinat a malo ad bonum, Liberum arbitrium est; dum
 negat uel consentit, Consciencia est; dum spirat, Spiritus
 est.*

‘3e ben as a bischop,’ quath ich · al bordynge that tyme,
 ‘For bischopes blessed · thei bereth meny names,
Presul and *pontifex* · and *metropolitanus*, 204
 And other names an hepe · *episcopus* and *pastor*.’
 ‘That is soth,’ he seide · ‘now ich seo thy wil
 How thow woldest know and conne · the cause of alle here
 names,

And of myne, yf thow myghtest · me thynketh by thy spechel’ 208
 ‘3e, syre,’ ich seyde, ‘by so · that no man were a-greued,
 Alle the science vnder sonne · and alle sotile craftes
 Ich wolde ich knewe and couthe · kyndeliche in myn herte.’

‘Thanne art thow inparfyt,’ quath he · ‘and on of Prydes
 knyghtes; 212

For suche a luste and lykynge · Lucifer fel fro heuene;

Ponam pedem meum in aquilone, et ero similis altissimo.

C. 202. bischop EF; bihshep P. 203. bischopes E; bihsshopes P.
 209. a-greuede P. 212. art MFT; ert PEG. inparfyt P. 213. louste P.
 feel (for fel) P.

It were aȝeynes kynde,' quod he · 'and alkynnes resoun, 52
 That any creature shulde kunne al · excepte Cryste one.
 Aȝein such Salomon speketh · and dispiseth her wittes,

And seith, *sicut qui mel comedit multum, non est ei bonum :*
sic qui scrutator est maiestatis, opprimitur a gloria.

To Englisch-men this is to mene · that mowen speke and here,
 The man that moche hony eteth · his mawe it engleymeth; 56
 And the more that a man · of good mater hereth,
 But he do ther-after · it doth hym double scathe:

Beatus est, seith seynt Bernard · *qui scripturas legit,*
Et verba vertit in opera · fullich to his powere. 60

Coueytise to kunne · and to knowe science
 Pulte out of paradys · Adam and Eue;

Sciencie appetitus hominem immortalitatis gloria spoliavit.

And riȝte as hony is yuel to defye · and engleymeth the mawe,
 Riȝt so that thorw resoun · wolde the rote knowe 64

Of god and of his grete myȝtes · his graces it letteth.
 For in the lykyng lith a pryde · and a lycames coueitise,
 Aȝein Crystes conseil · and alle clerkes techyng,

That is, *non plus sapere quam oportet sapere.*

Freres and fele other maistres · that to the lewed men prechen,
 ȝe moeuen materes inmesurables · to tellen of the trinite, 69
 That ofte tymes the lewed peple · of hir bileue douten.

Bettere byleue were mony · doctoures such techyng,
 And tellen men of the ten comaundementz · and touchen the
 seuene synnes, 72

And of the braunches that burgeouneth of hem · and bryngeth
 men to helle,

And how that folke in folyes · myspenden her fyue wittes,
 As wel freres as other folke · folilich spenen
 In housyng, in haterynge · and in-to hiegh clergye shewyng,
 More for pompe than for pure charite · the poeple wote the sothe
 That I lye nouȝt, loo! · for lordes ȝe plesen, 78

And reuerencen the riche · the rather for her syluer;

Confundantur omnes qui adorant sculptilia; et alibi:

Vt quid diligitis vanitatem, et queritis mendacium?

Go to the glose of the verse · ȝe grete clerkes; 80
 If I lye on ȝow to my lewed witte · ledeth me to brennyng!

Hit were a-geyn kynde,' quath he · 'and alle kynne resoun
 That eny creature sholde conne al · excepte Cryst one.
 Azene alle suche Salamon speketh · and dispiseth here wittes, 216
 And seith, *sicut qui mel comedit multum, non ei bonum est :—*
 sic qui scrutator est magestatis, opprimetur a gloria.
 To Englissh-men this is to mene · that mowen speke and huyre,
 The man that muche hony eet · his mawe hit engleymeth:
 The wyttiour that eny wight is · bote yf he worche ther-after,
 The biterour he shal a-bygge · bote yf he wel worche; 220
Beatus, seith seynt Bernard · *qui scripturas legit,*
Et uerba uertit in opera · emforth his power.
 Couetise to conne · and to knowe sciences
 Putte oute of paradys · Adam and Eue; 224
 Sciencie appetitus hominem immortalitatis gloria spoliavit.
 And ryght so as hony · is vuel to defie,
 Ryght so sothly sciences · swelleth in a mannes saule,
 And doth hym to be deynous · and deme that beth nat lerede;

Non plus sapere · seide the wyse, 228
Quam oportet sapere · lest synne of pruyde wexe.
 Freres fele sithes · to the folke that thei prechen
 Meuen motifs meny tymes · insolibles and fallaces,
 That bothe lered and lewed · of here by-leyue douten; 232

 To teche the ten commaundemens · were ten sithe bettere,

 And how that folke folyliche · here fif wittes myspenden,
 As wel freres as other folk · foliliche spenden
 In housyng and in helyynge · in hih clergie shewynge, 236
 More for pomp and prude · as the people wot wel
 That ich lye nat, loo · for lordes thei plesen,
 And reuerenceth the ryche · the rather for here seluer,

C. 214. reisonne P. 216. MSS. *opprimatur*; but read *opprimetur*.
 217. mene MFT; mete PE. 218. is (*for his*) P. 219. whyttiour P.
 whight P. 220. wel M; wol PETG. 223. sciences EMFTG; science P;
 see l. 226. 224. Pute P. *gloria* MFT; *gloriam* PEG. 234. that
 EMFTG; the P. 235. foliliche P. 238. plesyn P.

For as it semeth, ȝe forsaketh · no mannes almesse,
 Of vsureres, of hores · of auarous chapmen,
 And louten to this lordes · that mowen lene ȝow nobles, 84
 Aȝeine ȝowre reule and religioun · I take recorde at Iesus,
 That seide to his disciples · *ne sitis personarum acceptiores.*

Of this matere I myȝte · make a longe bible,
 Ac of curatoures of crystene peple · as clerkes bereth witnesse,
 I shal tellen it for treuth sake · take hede who so lyketh ! 89
 As holynesse and honeste · oute of holicherche spredeth
 Thorw lele libbyng men · that goddes lawe techen,
 Riȝt so out of holicherche · alle yueles spredeth, 92
 There inparfyt presthod is · prechoures and techeres.
 And se it by ensample · in somer-tyme on trowes,
 There somme bowes ben leued · and somme bereth none ;
 There is a myschief in the more · of suche manere bowes. 96
 Riȝt so persones and prestes · and prechoures of holy cherche,
 That aren rote of the riȝte faith · to reule the peple ;
 Ac there the rote is roten · reson wote the sothe,
 Shal neure floure ne frute · ne faire leef be grene. 100
 For-thi, wolde ȝe lettred leue · the leccherye of clothyng,
 And be kynde, as bifel for clerkes · and curteise of Crystes goodes,
 Trewe of ȝowre tonge · and of ȝowre taille bothe,
 And hatien to here harlotrye · and nouȝt to vnderfonge 104
 Tythes of vntrewe thinge · ytilied or chaffared,
 Lothe were lewed men · but thei ȝowre lore folwed,
 And amenden hem that mysdon · more for ȝowre ensamples,
 Than forto prechen and preue it nouȝt · ypocrysie it semeth. 108
 For ypocrysie in Latyn · is lykned to a dongehul,
 That were bysnewed with snowe · and snakes wyth-inne ;
 Or to a wal that were whitlymed · and were foule wyth-inne.
 Riȝt so many prestes · prechoures and prelates, 112
 ȝe aren enblaunched with *bele paroles* · and with clothes also,
 Ac ȝowre werkes and ȝowre wordes there-vnder · aren ful vnlouelich.

Iohannes Crysostomus · of clerkes speketh and prestes,

*Sicut de templo omne bonum progreditur, sic de templo omne
 malum procedit.*

Azens the counsail of Cryst · as holy cleregye witnesseth; 240

Ne sitis acceptiores personarum.

Loo, what holy wryt wyttnesseth · of wikked techeres;

As holyness and honeste · out of holy churche

Spryngeth and spredeth · and enspireth the people

Thorgh parfit preest-hood · and prelates of holichurche, 244

Ryght so out of holychurche · al vuel spredeth,

Ther imparfit preest-hod is · prechours and techours.

And seo hit by ensample · of trees in somer-tyme,

Ther somme bowes bereth leues · and somme bereth none; 248

The bowes that bereth nat · and beeth nat grene-leuede,

Ther is a myschif in the more · of suche manere stockes.

Ryght so persones and preestes · and prechers of holy churche

Ys the rote of the ryght feithe · to reuwele the people; 252

Ac ther the rote is roten · reson wot the sothe,

Shal neuere floure ne frut wexe · ne fair leef be grene.

For wolde 3e letteride leue · the lecherie of clothinge,

And be courteis and kynde · of holykirke goodes, 256

Parte with the poure · and 3oure pruyde leue,

And therto trewe of 3oure tonge · and of 3oure tail also,

And haten harlotrie · and to vnderfonge the tythes

Of vserers and of hores · and of al vuel wyynynges, 260

Loth were lewede men · bote thei 3oure lore folweden,

And a-menden hem of here mysdedes · more for 3oure ensamples

Than for to preche and preuen hit nat; · ypocrisie hit semeth!

Ypocrisie is a braunche of pruyde · and most among clerkes, 264

And is ylikned in Latyn · to a lothliche dounghep,

That were by-snywe al with snow · and snakes with-ynne,

Or to a wal whit-lymed · and were blak with-inne.

Ry3t so meny preestes · prechours and prelates, 268

That beth enblaunched with *bele paroles* · and with *bele* clothes;

And as lambes thei loken · and lyuen as wolues.

Iohannes Crisostomus · karpeth thus of clerkes,

Sicut de templo omne bonum progreditur, sic de templo omne malum procedit.

C. 240. whittnesseth P. 242. honeste EMFTG; honestete P. 246,
 248, 250. Theer (*for* Ther) P. 252. (2nd) the MTF; PEG *om.* ryghit P.
 255. 3e MT; the PEG. 256. kirke T; churche P. 257. with the
 EMFT; whithe P. 258. trywe P. 259. and MFTG; PE *om.* 265.
 is MFT; PEG *om.* 267. *This line is in T only.*

Si sacerdocium integrum fuerit, tota floret ecclesia; si autem corruptum fuerit, omnium fides marcida est.

Si sacerdocium fuerit in peccatis, totus populus conuertitur ad peccandum.

Sicut cum videris arborem pallidam et marcidam, inteligis quod viciium habet in radice,

Ita cum videris populum indisciplinatum et irreligiosum, sine dubio sacerdocium eius non est sanum.

If lewed men wist · what this Latyn meneth, 116
 And who was myn auctor · moche wonder me thinketh,
 But if many a prest bere · for here baselardes and here broches,
 A peyre bedes in her hande · and a boke vnder her arme.
 Sire Iohan and sire Geffray · hath a gerdel of syluer, 120
 A basellarde, or a ballokknif · with botones ouergylte.
 Ac a portous that shulde be his plow · *placebo* to segge,
 Hadde he neure seruyse to saue syluer ther-to · seith it with yvel
 wille!

Allas! 3e lewed men · moche lese 3e on prestes, 124
 Ac thinge that wykkedlich is wonne · and with false sleigthes,
 Wolde neuere witte of witty god · but wikked men it hadde;
 The which aren prestes inparfit · and prechoures after syluer,
 Sectoures and sudenes · somnoures and her lemmannes. 128
 This that with gyle was geten · vngraciouslich is spended;
 So harlotes and hores · ar hulpen with such goodis,
 And goddes folke for defaute ther-of · forfaren and spillen.

Curatoures of holykirke · as clerkes that ben auerouse, 132
 Liztlich that they leuen · loselles it habbeth,
 Or dyeth intestate · and thanne the bisshop entreth,
 And maketh murthe there-with · and his men bothe,
 And seggen, "he was a nygarde · that no good myzte aspare
 To frende ne to fremmed · the fende haue his soule! 137
 For a wrecched hous he helde · al his lyf tyme;
 And that he spared and bispered · spene we in murthe."
 By lered, by lewed · that loth is to spende, 140
 Thus gone her godes · be the goste faren.
 Ac for good men, god wote · gret dole men maken,
 And bymeneth good mete-3yueres · and in mynde haueth,

B. 119. MS. O (*which in l. 118 has beer for bere*) has a totally different line here, viz. Schulden go synge seruyseles · with sire philip the sparwe.
 136. aspare WCRB; asspare L.

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Alas! lewede men · muche leese ȝe that fynden 272

Vnkynde creatures · to beo kepers of ȝoure soules!

Ac thyng that wikkedliche is wonne · and with false sleithes,

Wolde neuere other-wise god · bote wicked men hit hadde,

As imparfit preestes · and prechers after seluer, 276

Secutours and sodenes · somners and here lemmannes;

And that with gyle was gete · vngraciousliche be dispended.

Curatours of holychurche · and clerkus that ben auarous,

Lightliche that thei leue · loseles hit deuouren. 280

Leyueth hit wel, lordes · bothe lered and lewede,

That thus goth here godes · atte laste ende,

C. 275. PE *insert* that *after* neuere.
EG; deuoren P.

279. auerous P.

280. deuouren

In prayers and in penaunces · and in parfyt charite.' 144

'What is Charite?' quod I tho · 'a childissh thinge,' he seide ;

'Nisi efficiamini sicut paruuli, non intrabitis in regnum celorum ;

With-outen fauntelte or foly · a fre liberal wille.'

'Where shulde men fynde such a frende · with so fre an herte ?
I haue lyued in londe,' quod I · 'my name is Longe Wille, 148

And fonde I neuere ful charite · bifore ne bihynde!

Men beth mercyable · to mendynantz and to pore,

And wolen lene there thei leue · lelly to ben payed.

Ac charite that Poule preyseth best · and most plesaunte to
owre saueoure, 152

As, non inflatur, non est ambiciosa, non querit que sua sunt,
I seigh neuere such a man · so me god helpe,

That he ne wolde aske after his · and otherwhile coueyte

Thinge that neded hym nouzt · and nyme it if he myzte!

Clerkis kenne me that Cryst · is in alle places; 156

Ac I seygh hym neuere sothly · but as my-self in a miroure,

Ita in enigmat, tunc facie ad faciem.

And so I trowe trewly · by that men telleth of charite,

It is nought championes fyzte · ne chaffare, as I trowe.'

'Charite,' quod he, 'ne chaffareth nouzte · ne chalengeth, ne
craueth. 160

As proude of a peny · as of a pounce of golde,

And is as gladde of a goun · of a graye russet

As of a tunicle of Tarse · or of trye scarlet.

He is gladde with alle gladde · and good tyl alle wykked, 164

And leueth and loueth alle · that owre lorde made.

Curseth he no creature · ne he can bere no wratthe,

Ne no lykyng hath to lye · ne laughe men to scorne.

Al that men seith, he let it soth · and in solace taketh, 168

And alle manere meschiefs · in myldenesse he suffreth;

Coueiteth he none erthly good · but heuene-riche blisse.'

B. 152. *inflatur* WCROB; *inflatus* L. L om. *est*.
It L. 164. tyl WCRO; ty L.

157. *Ita* COB;

That lyuen a-ȝens holy lore : and the loue of charite.'

'Charite,' quath ich tho • 'that is a thing for sothe 284
That maistres comenden muche ; • wher may hit be founde?
Ich haue lyued in London • meny longe ȝeres,
And founde ich neuere in faith • as freres hit precheth,
Charite, that chargeth nat • ne chit, thauh men greue hym, 288
As Paul in a pistele • of hym bereth witesse ;

Non inflatur, non est ambiciosa, non querit que sua sunt.

Ich knew neuere, by Cryst • clerk nother lewede,
That he ne askede after hus • and other-whyle coueytede
Thyng that needede hym nat • and nyme hit, yf he myghte ! 292
For thoȝ men soȝt al sectes • of sustren and of bretheren,
And thow fynde hym, bote figuratifliche • a ferly me thinketh ;

Hic in enigmate, tunc facie ad faciem :—

And so ich trowe trewely • by that men tellen of Charite.'

'Charite is a childish thing • as holichurche wittneseth, 296

*Nisi efficiamini sicut paruuli, non intrabitis in regnum
celorum :*

DISTINCTIO CARITATIS.

As proud of a peny • as of a pounde of golde,
And al-so glad of a goune • of a grey russet
As of a cote of cammoka • other of clene scarlett.
He is glad with alle glade • as gurles that lauhē alle, 300
And sory when he seeth men sory • as thow seest children
Lauhen ther men lauhē • and loure ther men loureth.
And when a man swereth for soth • for soth he hit troweth ;
He weneth that no wiȝt • wold lyghe and swere, 304
Ne that eny gome wolde gylen • other, ne greue,
For drede of god that is so good • and thus-gates ous techeth,

Quodcumque uultis ut uobis faciant homines, facile eis.

He hath no lykyngē to lauhe • ne lyghe, men to scorne ;
Alle siknesses and sorwes • for solas he hem taketh, 308
And alle manere meschifs • as minstracie of heuene.

C. 283. That MFT ; And PE. 286. aue (*for* haue) P. lyuede P. london
M ; londoun F ; lundoun T ; londen PEG. 290. knew EMFG ; knowe P.
clek P. 293. *From* EMFGT ; P *om. this line.* 294. thow M ; thou F ;
PETG *om.* 296. *non—celorum* E. *Distinctio, &c.* M. 302. an (*for*
and) P. 304. that MFT ; nat PE. whiȝt P. 306. gatis T (*read* gates) ;
PEMF *om.* 307. ne EMF ; no P ; ne to T. lyhe P (*see* l. 304). 308. hem
MF ; hit PET.

‘Hath he any rentes or ricchesse · or any riche frendes?’
 ‘Of rentes ne of ricchesse · ne reccheth he neuere. 172
 For a frende that fyndeth hym · failed hym neuere at nede;
Fiat-voluntas tua · fynt hym euer-more.

And if he soupeth, eet but a soppe · of *spera-in-deo*.
 He can purtreye wel the *pater-noster* · and peynte it with *aves*,
 And other-while is his wone · to wende in pilgrymage, 177
 There pore men and priones liggeth · her pardoun to haue
 Though he bere hem no bred · he bereth hem swetter lyfode,
 Loueth hem as owre lorde biddeth · and loketh how thei fare.

And whan he is wery of that werke · thanne wil he some tyme
 Labory in a lauendrye · wel the lengthe of a myle, 182
 And 3erne in-to 3outhe · and 3epliche speke
 Pryde with al the appurtenaunce · and pakken hem togyderes,
 And bouken hem at his brest · and beten hem clene, 185
 And leggen on longe · with *laboraui-in-gemitu-meo*,
 And with warme water at his eyghen · wasshen hem after.
 And thanne he syngeth whan he doth so · and some tyme seith
 wepyng, 188

Cor contritum et humiliatum, deus, non despicias.

‘By Cryst, I wolde that I knewe hym,’ quod I · ‘no creature
 leuere!’
 ‘With-uten helpe of Piers Plowman,’ quod he · ‘his persone
 seestow neuere.’
 ‘Where clerkes knowen hym,’ quod I · ‘that kepen holykirke?’
 ‘Clerkes haue no knowyng,’ quod he · ‘but by werkes and
 bi wordes. 192

Ac Piers the Plowman · parceyueth more depper
 What is the wille and wherfore · that many wyte suffreth,
Et vidit deus cogitaciones eorum.
 For there are ful proude-herted men · paciente of tonge,
 And boxome as of berynge · to burgeys and to lordes, 196
 And to pore peple · han peper in the nose,
 And as a lyoun he loketh · there men lakketh his werkes.

For there ar beggeres and bidderes · bedemen as it were,
 Loketh as lambren · and semen lyf-holy, 200
 Ac it is more to haue her mete · with such an esy manere,

B. 175. eet R; eteth W; ette L. 194. What W; That LR; Wher COB.
 199. bedemen WROB; bedmen LC.

Of deth ne of derthe · drad was he neuere,
 Ne mysliked, thauh he loore · other lenede to that ilke
 That neuere payed peny aze · in place there he borwede.' 312
 'Who fyndeth hym his fode?' quath ich · 'other what frendes
 hath he,
 Rentes other riches · to releue hym at hus neode?'
 'Of rentes ne of riches,' quath he · 'reccheth he neuere,
 A frend he hath that fynt him · that faileth him neuere. 316
 On *Aperis-tu-manum* · alle thyng hym fyndeth;
Fiat-uoluntas-tua · festeth hym eche day.
 And also he can clergie · *credo-in-deum-patrem*,
 And portreieth wel the *pater-noster* · and peynteth hit with
 auces. 320
 And other-while hus wone is · to wende in pilgrimages,
 Ther poure men and prysouns beth · and payeth for here lyfode,
 Clotheth hem and comforteth hem · and of Crist precheth hem,
 What sorwes he suffrede · in ensample of ous alle, 324
 That pouerte and pacience · parfitliche ytake
 Ys muche merit to that man · that wel may suffren.
 Whan he hath thus visited fetered folke · and other folke poure,
 Then he ȝerneth in-to thouht · and ȝepliche he secheth 328
 Pruyde, with alle the portinaunce · and packeth hem togederes,
 And laueth hem in the lauandrie · *laboraui-in-gemitu-meo*,
 And bouketh hem at hus brest · and beteth hit ofte,
 And with warme water of hus eyen · woketh hit til hit white; 332
 Lauabis me, et super niuem dealbabor.
 Thanne syngeth he whanne he so doth · and som tyme wepyng,
 Cor contritum et humiliatum, deus, non despicias.
 'Were ich with hym, by Crist,' quath ich · 'ich wolde neuere
 fro hym,
 Thauh ich my by-lyue sholde begge · a-boute at menne hacches.
 Wher clerkus knowe hym nat,' quath ich · 'that kepen holy-
 churche?' 336
 'Peers the Plouman,' quath he · 'most parfitliche hym knoweth;
 Et uidit deus cogitationes eorum.

C. 316. From MFTG; PE om. this line. 320. wel MFTG; PE om.
 327. visetid P. 331. beeteth P. 332. wharme P. hit til hit M; hem
 til hit G; it til he F; hit he PT.

Than for penaunce and parfitnesse · the pouerte that such taketh.
There-fore by coloure ne by clergie · knowe shaltow hym
neuere,

Noyther thorw wordes ne werkes · but thorw wille one. 204

And that knoweth no clerke · ne creature in erthe,

But Piers the Plowman · *Petrus, id est, Christus.*

For he ne is nouȝte in lolleres · ne in lande-leperes hermytes,
Ne at ancras, there a box hangeth · alle suche thei faiten. 208
Fy on faitoures · and *in fauiores suos!*

For charyte is goddis champioun · and as a good chylde hende,
And the meryest of mouth · at mete where he sitteth.

The loue that lith in his herte · maketh hym lyȝte of speche,
And is companable and confortatyf · as Cryst bit hymselfue, 213

Nolite fieri sicut ypocrite, tristes, etc.

For I haue seyn hym in sylke · aud somme tyme in russet,
Bothe in grey and in grys · and in gulte herneys,
And as gladlich he it gaf · to gomes that it neded. 216

Edmonde and Edward · eyther were kynges,

And seyntes ysette · tyl charite hem folwed.

I haue seyne Charite also · syngen and reden,
Ryden and rennen · in ragged wedes, 220

Ac biddyng as beggeres · bihelde I hym neuere.

Ac in riche robes · rathest he walketh,

Ycalled and ycrimiled · and his crowne shaue,

And clenlich yclothed · in cipres and in Tartaryne. 224

And in a freres frokke · he was yfounde ones,

Ac it is ferre agoo · in seynt Fraunceys tyme ;

In that secte sitthe · to selde hath he be knowen.

Riche men he recomendeth · and of her robes taketh, 228

That with-outen wyles · leden her lyues,

Beatus est diues, qui, etc.

In kynges courte he cometh ofte · there the conseil is trewe,
Ac if coueityse be of the conseil · he wil nouȝt come ther-inne.

In courte amonge Iaperes · he cometh but selde, 232

For braulyng and bakbytyng · and beryng of fals witnesse.

In the constorie bifor the comissarie · he cometh nouȝt ful ofte,

For her lawe dureth ouer-longe · but if thei lacchen syluer ;

And matrimoigne for monye · maken and vnmaken, 236

B. 213. companable RCO; compenable L.
om. this line.

224. From OCB; LWR

By clothyng ne by karpinge · knowe shalt thou hym neuere, 338
 Ac thorw werkes thou myght wite · wher forth he walketh;
Operibus credite.

He is the muriest of mouthe · at metes ther he sitteth,

And compenable in companye · as Crist hym-self techeth,
Nolite tristes fieri, sicut ypocrite.

Ich haue seyen hym my-self · som tyme in russett, 342
 Bothe in greye and in grys · and in gylt harneys,
 And al-so gladliche he gyueth · to gomes that hit needeth.
 Eadmund and Edward · ayther were seyntes,
 And chief charite with hem · and chast al here lyue. 346
 Ich haue seyen Charite al-so · syngen and rede,
 Ryden, and rennen · in raggede clothes,
 Ac biddying as a beggere · by-heold ich hym neuere.
 Ac in riche robes · rathest he walketh, 350
 Y-called and ycrymyled · and hus croune shaue.

And in a freres frocke · he was yfounde ones,
 Ac it is fer and fele ȝeres · in Fraunceys tyme;
 In that secte sitthe · to selde he hath be founde. 354
 Riche men he comendeth · and of here robes taketh,
 Of tho that leelliche lyuen · and louen and by-leyuen;
Beatus est diues sine macula.

In kynges court he cometh · yf hus counsail be trewe;
 Ac yf couetise be of hus counsail · he wol nat come ther-ynne.
 Among the comunes in court · he cometh but selde, 359
 For brawelynge and bacbytynge · and beryng of false wittnesse.
 In constorie by-fore the comissarie · he cometh nat ful ofte,
 For here lawe is ouere-longe · bote yf thei lacche seluer.

C. 343. grys G; gris EFT; greys P. 352. a EMFTG; P om. 353
 fer FTG; feer P. 359. selde EMTG; seilde P.

And that conscience and Cryst · hath yknitte faste,
 Thei vndon it vnworthily · tho doctours of lawe.
 Amonges erchebischopes and other bischopes · and prelates of
 holy cherche,
 For to wonye with hem · his wone was sum tyme, 240
 And Cristes patrimonye to the pore · parcel-mel dele.
 Ac auerice hath the keyes now · and kepeth for his kynnesmen,
 And for his seketoures and his seruants · and somme for here
 children.

Ac I ne lakke no lyf · but lorde, amende vs alle, 244
 And gyue vs grace, good god · charite to folwe!
 For who so myzte mete with hym · such maneres hym eyleth,
 Noyther he blameth ne banneth · bosteth, ne prayseth,
 Lakketh, ne loseth · ne loketh vp sterne; 248
 Craueth, ne coueiteth · ne crieth after more,

In pace in id-ipsum dormiam, etc.

The moste lyflode that he lyueth by · is loue in goddis passioun.
 Noyther he biddeth, ne beggeth · ne borweth to ȝelde;
 Misdoth he no man · ne with his mouth greueth. 252

Amonges Cristene men · this myldnesse shulde laste;
 In alle manere angres · haue this at herte—
 That though thei suffred al this · god suffred for vs more,
 In ensample we shulde do so · and take no veniaunce 256
 Of owre foes that doth vs falsenesse · that is owre fadres wille.
 For wel may euery man wite · if god hadde wolde hymselfe,
 Sholde neuere Iudas ne Iuwe · haue Iesu don on rode,
 Ne han martired Peter ne Poule · ne in prisoun holden. 260
 Ac he suffred in ensample · that we shulde suffre also,
 And seide to suche that suffre wolde · that *patientes vincunt*.

Verbi gratia, quod he · ‘and verrey ensamples manye,
 In *Legenda Sanctorum* · the lyf of holy seyntes, 264
 What penaunce and pouerte · and passioun thei suffred,
 In hunger, in hete · in al manere angres.
 Antony and Egidie · and other holi fadres
 Woneden in wilderness · amonge wilde bestes; 268
 Monkes and mendynauntz · men bi hem-selue,
 In spekes and in spelonkes · selden speken togideres.
 Ac noyther Antony ne Egidy · ne hermite that tyme

With bisshopes he wolde beo · for beggers sake,
 Ac auarice other-whiles · halt hym with-oute the gate. 364
 Kynges and cardineles · knowen hym som tyme,
 Ac thorw couetise and his consail · congeied is he ofte.
 And ho so coueyteth to know hym · such a kynde hym folweth,
 As ich tolde the with tonge · a lytel tyme passed;
 For nother he beggeth, ne biddeth · ne borweth to ȝelde;
 He halt hit a nycete · and a foul shame 370
 To beggen other to borwe · bote of god one;
Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie.

Hic explicit passus septimus et ultimus de Dowel.

PASSUS XVIII.

Incipit passus primus de Dobet.

‘**T**HER is no suche,’ ich seide · ‘that som tyme ne borweth,
 Other beggeth other byddeth · beo he ryche other poure,
 And ȝut other-while wroth · with-oute eny synne.’
 ‘Ho so is wroth and wolde be awreke · holi wryt,’ quath he,
 ‘proueth 4
 He passeth chief charite · if holichurche beo trewe;
Caritas omnia suffert.
 Holy writ witnesseth · ther were suche eremites,
 Solitarie by hem-self · and in here selles lyueden
 With-oute borwyngge other beggyngge · bote of god one; 8

C. 364. auarice P. 367. a MFT; P om. 370. a nycete P; T has
 for a vice (*which seems better*). 371. *da—hodie* F (*only*).
 Passus XVIII. 5. hif P. trywe P. 6. whitnesseþ P.

Of liouns ne of leoperdes · no lyflode ne toke, 272
 But of foules that fleeth · thus fynt men in bokes.
 Excepte that Egydie · after an hynde cryede,
 And thorw the mylke of that mylde best · the man was susteyned;
 And day by day had he hir nouȝt · his hunger forto slake, 276
 But selden and sondrie tymes · as seith the boke and techeth.

Antony a dayes · aboute none-tyme,
 Had a bridde that brouȝte hym bred · that he by lyued;
 And though the gome hadde a geste · god fonde hem bothe. 280

Poule *primus heremita* · had parroked hym-selue,
 That no man miȝte hym se · for mosse and for leues;
 Foules hym fedde · fele wynteres with alle,
 Til he founded freres · of Austines ordre. 284

Poule, after his prechyng · panyers he made,
 And wan with his hondes · that his wombe neded.
 Peter fished for his fode · and his felawe Andrewe;
 Some thei solde and some thei sothe · and so thei lyued bothe.
 And also Marie Magdeleyne · by mores lyued and dewes, 289
 Ac moste thorw deuocioun · and mynde of god almiȝty.

I shulde nouȝt this seuene dayes · seggen hem alle,
 That lyueden thus for owre lordes loue · manye longe ȝeres. 292
 Ac there ne was lyoun ne leopart · that on laundes wenten,
 Noyther bere, ne bor · ne other best wilde,
 That ne fel to her feet · and fauned with the tailles.

And if thei couth han ycarped · by Cryst, as I trowe, 296
 Thei wolde haue fedde that folke · bifor wilde foules.

For alle the curteisie that bestes kunne · thei kidde that folke ofte
 In likkyng and in lowynge · there thei on laundes ȝede.

Ac god sent hem fode bi foules · and by no fierse bestes, 300
 In menyngge that meke thinge · mylde thinge shulde fede;
 As who seith, religious · ryȝtful men shulde fynde,
 And lawful men to lyf-holy men · lyflode brynge.

B. 276. And L; Ac R (*perhaps better*). 298, 299. *These lines are in R only.*

Excepte that Egidie · an hynde other-while
 To hus selle selde cam · and suffrede to be melked.
 Elles fouweles fedden hem · in frythes ther thei woneden,
 Bothe Antonye and Erseny · and other mo fele. 12

Paul *primus heremita* · hadde parroked hym-selue,
 That no man myghte se hym · for muche mos and leues;
 Foweles hym fedde · yf frere Austyn be trewe;
 For he ordeynede that ordre · other elles thei gabben. 16
 Paul after his prechyng · panyeres he made,
 And wan with hus hondes · al that hym neodyde.
 Peter fysshed for hus fode · and hus fere Andreu;
 Som thei solde, and som thei sode · and so thei leueden bothe.
 Marie Magdalene · by mores leuede and dewes; 21
 Loue and leel by-leyue · heeld lyf and soule to-gedere.

Maria Egyptiaca · eet in thyrty wynter
 Bote thre lytel loues · and loue was her souel. 24
 Ich can nat rekene hem ryght now · ne reberce here names,
 That lyueden thus for oure lordes loude · meny longe ȝeres,
 With-oute borwyng other beggyng · other the bok lyeth,
 And woneden in wilderness · a-mong wilde bestes; 28
 Ac dorst no best byten hem · by daye ne by nyghte,
 Bote myldeliche, whan thei metten · maden lough chere,
 And feyre by-fore tho men · fauhuede with the tayles.
 Ac bestes brouhte hem no mete · bot onliche the fouwelcs, 32
 In tokenyng that trewe man · alle tymes sholde
 Fynde honeste men and holy men · and other ryghtful people.
 For wolde neuere feithful god · that freres and monkes token
 Lyflode of luther wynnynge · in al here lif-tyme. 36

As wytnesseth holy writ · what Thobie seyde
 To his wif, whan he was blynde · he herde a lamb blete;
 'A! wyf! be war,' quath he · 'what ȝe haue here-ynne;
 Lord leyue,' quath the lede · 'no stole thyng be here!' 40

Videte ne furtum sit: et alibi, melius est mori quam male uiuere.

This is no more to mene · bote men of holychurche
 Sholde receyue ryght nauȝt · bot that ryght wolde,

C. 10. selde EMTG; seilde P. 16. gabben EMTG; gabbyn P. 17.
 is (*for his*) P. 30. chere EMT; chire P. 34. (1st) and MFTG; in PE.
 35. god EMTGF; goud P. 37. writt P. 38. is (*for his*) P. he MFTG;
 PE om. 42. nauȝt MFT; nauth P.

And thanne wolde lordes and ladyes · be loth to agulte, 304
 And to take of her tenauntz · more than treuth wolde,
 Fonde thei that freres · wolde forsake her almesses,
 And bidden hem bere it · there it was yborwed.

For we ben goddes foules · and abiden alwey, 308
 Tyl briddes brynge vs · that we shulde lyue by.

For had 3e potage and payn ynough · and peny-ale to drynke,
 And a messe there-mydde · of o manere kynde,

3e had riȝt ynough, 3e religious · and so 3owre reule me tolde :

Nunquam, dicit Iob, rugiet onager cum herbam habuerit?

aut mugiet bos cum ante plenum presepe steterit?

*Brutorum animalium natura te condempnat, quia cum eis
 pabulum commune sufficiat; ex adipe prodijt iniquitas tua.*

If lewed men knewe this Latyn · thei wolde loke whom thei 3eue,
 And auyse hem bifore · a fyue dayes or sexe,

Or thei amortesed to monkes · or chanouns her rentes.

Allas! lordes and ladyes · lewed conseilie haue 3e 316

To 3yue fram 3owre eyres · that 3owre ayeles 3ow lefte,

And 3iueth to bidde for 3ow · to such that ben riche,

And ben founded and fessed eke · to bidde for other.

Who perfourneth this prophecye · of the peple that now lybbeth,

Dispersit, dedit pauperibus, etc.?

If any peple perfourme that texte · it ar this pore freres! 321

For that thei beggen abouten · in buildynge thei spene,

And on hem-self sum · and such as ben her laboreres,

And of hem that habbeth thei taken · and 3yue hem that ne habbeth.

Ac clerkes and knyȝtes · and comuneres that ben riche, 325

Fele of 3ow fareth · as if I a forest hadde,

That were ful of faire trees · and I fonded and caste

How I myȝte mo ther-inne · amonges hem sette. 328

Riȝt so, 3e riche · 3e robeth that ben riche,

And helpeth hem that helpeth 3ow · and 3iueth there no nede is.

As who so filled a tonne · of a fresshe ryuer,

And went forth with that water · to woke with Themese, 332

Riȝt so, 3e riche · 3e robeth and fedeth

Hem that han as 3e han; · hem 3e make at ese.

Ac religious that riche ben · shulde rather feste beggeres

Than burgeys that riche ben · as the boke techeth; 336

And refuse reuerences · and raueneres offrynges.
 Thenne wolde lordes and ladies · be loth for to agulte, 44
 And to take of here tenauns · more than treuthe wolde;
 And marchauns merciable wolde be · and men of lawe bothe.
 Wolde religiose refuse · raueneres almesse,
 Then grace sholde growe ȝut · and grene-leued wexe, 48
 And Charite, that child is now · sholde chaufen of him-self,
 And confortye alle Cristene · wold holykirke amende.
 Iob the parfit patriark · this prouerbe wrot and tauhte, 51
 To makye a man louye mesure · that monkes beeth and freres;
*Nunquam, dicit Iob, rugiet onager cum habuerit herbam,
 aut mugiet bos cum ante plenum presepe steterit? Brut-
 orum animalium natura te condempnat, quia cum pabulum
 sufficiat commune, ex adipe prodiit iniquitas.*

Yf lewede men knewe this Latyn · a litel thei wolde auisen hem
 Er thei amortisede eny more · for monkes other for chanons.
 Alas! lordes and ladies · lewede counsail haue ȝe
 That founded beth to fulle · to fesse suche and fede 56
 With that ȝoure barnes and ȝoure blod · by goode lawe may cleyme!
 For god bad hus blessedde · as the book techeth,

Honora patrem et matrem, ut longeuus sis, etc.,
 To helpe thy fader formest · by-fore freres and monkes,
 And er prestes other pardoneres · other eny people elles. 60
 Help thi kynne, Crist bit · for ther by-gynneth charite,
 And afterwarde awaite · hoo hath moost neede,
 And ther help yf thou hast · and that halde ich charite.

Loo! Laurence for hus largenesse! · as holy lore telleth, 64
 That hus mede and hus man-hede · for euere-more shal laste;

Iusticia eius manet in eternum.
 He gaf godes men godes goodes · and nat to grete lordes,
 And fedde that a-fyngred were · and in defaute lyueden. 67
 Ich dar nat carpe of clerkes now · that Cristes tresoure kepen,
 That poure people by pure ryght · here part thei myghten aske;
 Of that that holychurche · of the olde lawe cleymeth,
 Priestes on aparail · and on Purnele spenen. 71

C. 49. him MF; hem PETG. 50. kirke T; churche PEF. 55. ȝe
 MFTG; we P. 58. *ut*—&c. is in F only. 62. awhaite P. 66.
 (2nd) godes MG; goddes I; godis T; PE om. 68. dar IMFTG; der P.
 70. ȝat ȝat MFITG; ȝat PE.

Quia sacrilegium est res pauperum non pauperibus dare.

Item, peccatoribus dare, est demonibus immolare.

Item, monache, si indiges et accipis, potius das quam accipis.

Si autem non eges, et accipis, rapis.

Porro, non indiget monachus, si habeat quod nature sufficit.

For-thi I conseil le alle Cristene · to confourmen hem to charite ;
For charite with-oute chalengynge · vnchargeth the soule,
And many a prisone fram purgatorie · thorw his preyeres he
delyuereth.

Ac there is a defaute in the folke · that the faith kepeth ; 340
Wherefore folke is the feblere · and nouȝt ferme of bilieue.
As in Lussheborwes is a lyther alay · and ȝet loketh he lyke a
sterlynge,

The merke of that mone is good · ac the metal is fieble ;
And so it fareth by some folke now · thei han a faire speche,
Croune and Crystendome · the kynges merke of heuene, 345
Ac the metal, that is mannes soule · with synne is foule alayed ;
Bothe lettred and lewede · beth allayed now with synne,
That no lyf loueth other · ne owre lorde, as it semeth. 348
For thorw werre and wykke werkes · and wederes vnresonable,
Wederwise shipmen · and witti clerkes also
Han no bilieue to the lifte · ne to the lore of filosofres.

Astrymyanes alday · in her arte faillen, 352
That whilum warned bifore · what shulde falle after.
Shipmen and sheperdes · that with shipp and shepe wenten,
Wisten by the walkene · what shulde bityde ;
As of wederes and wyndes · thei warned men ofte. 356
Tilieres that tiled the erthe · tolden her maistres,
By the sede that thei sewe · what thei selle miȝte,
And what to lene and what to lyue by · the londe was so trewe.
Now failleth the folke of the flode · and of the londe bothe,
Sheperdes and shipmen · and so do this tilieres ; 361
Noither thei kunneth ne knoweth · one cours bi-for another.
Astrymyanes also · aren at her wittes ende ;
Of that was calculed of the element · the contrarie thei fynde.

B. 339. delyuereth WOB ; delyureth L. 354. sheperdes L. 359.
what WCOB ; LR om. 361. Sheperdes L.

Men may lykne letterid men · to a Lussheborgh, other werse,
 And to a badde peny · with a good preynte. 73
 For of muche moneye · the metal is ryght naught,
 Ȝut is the prente pure trewe · and parfitliche graue.
 And so it fareth by false Cristine · here follouht is trewe, 76
 Cristendome of holykirke · the kynges marke of heuene;
 Ac the metal, that is mannes saule · of meny of these techeres
 Is alayed with lecherie · and other lustes of synne,
 That god coueiteth nat the coygne · that Crist hym-self prentede;
 And for synne of the soule · for-saketh hus owne coygne. 81
 Thus are the lithere lykned · to Lussheborue sterlinges,
 That faire by-fore folke · prechen and techen,
 And worchen nat as thei fynden wryten · and wissen the people.
 For what thorw werre and wrake · and wycked hyfdes, 85
 May no preiour pees make · in no place, hit semeth;
 Lewede men haucn no by-leyue · so letterid men erren.
 Neither the see ne the sande · ne the seed ȝeldeth 88
 As thei woned were; · in wham is defaute?
 Nat in god, that he nys good · and the grounde bothe;
 And the see and the seed · the sonne and the mone
 Don her deuer day and nyȝt · and yf we duden also, 92
 Ther sholde be plente and pees · perpetuel for euere.
 Wederwise shupmen now · and other witty people
 Han no by-leyue to the lyft · ne to the lood-sterre.
 Astronomyens al day · in here art failen, 96
 That whilom warned men by-fore · what shoulde by-falle after.
 Shupmen and shephurdes · by the séuen sterres
 Wisten while and tolden · whenne hit shoulde reynen.
 Tyliers that tyleden the erthe · tolden here maystres 100
 By the seed that thei sewe · what thei shoulde notye,
 And what lyue by and lene · the londe was so trewe.
 Now failleth this folke · bothe sowers and shupmen,
 Nother thei knoweth ne conneth · o cours by a-nother. 104
 Astronomyens al-so · aren at here wittes end;
 Of that was calculed of the clymat · the contrarye they fyndeth.

C. 72. luhssheborgh P. 75. an P. 76. triwe P. 77. kirke I; church
 PEF. 80. ȝe EMIF. ȝat P. prentede P. 81. ȝe EMIF. P om.
 82. luhssheborue P. 90. good IMF. goud P. 92. nyȝth P. 94. Weder-
 wise I; Wonderwyse PEMFGT. 95. loodsterres P. 97. whilom IFTG;
 whilen PE. 102. whas P.

Gramer, the grounde of al · bigyleth now children ; 365
 For is none of this newe clerkes · who so nymeth hede,
 That can versifye faire · ne formalich enditen ;
 Ne nouzt on amonge an hundreth · that an auctour can construe,
 Ne rede a lettre in any langage · but in Latyn or in Englissh.
 Go now to any degre · and but-if Gyle be mayster,
 And Flaterere his felawe · vnder hym to fourmen,
 Moche wonder me thynketh · amonges vs alle. 372
 Doctoures of decres · and of diuinite maistres,
 That shulde konne and knowe · alkynnes clergye,
 And answeere to argumentz · and also to a *quodlibet*,
 (I dar nouzt seggen it for shame) · if suche weren apposed,
 Thei shulde failen in her filosofye · and in phisyk bothe. 377
 Wher-fore I am afered · of folke of holikirke,
 Lest thei ouerhuppen as other don · in offices and in houres.
 Ac if thei ouerhuppe, as I hope nouzte · owre byleue suffiseth ;
 As clerkes in *Corpus-Christi* feste · singen and reden, 381
 That *sola fides sufficit* · to saue with lewed peple.

Grammere, that groundē is of alle · by-gyleth now children;
 For ther is nouthe non · who so nymeth hede, 108
 That can versifie fayre · other formeliche endite,
 Ne that can construen kyndeliche · that poetes maden.
 Gowe now to eny degre · and, bote Gyle be halde a mayster,
 And a flaterer for hus usshere · a ferliche me thynketh! 112
 Doctours of decree · and of dyuyn maystres,
 That shoulde the seuene ars conne · and a-soile *ad quodlibet*,
 Bote thei faille in fylosophye ·—and philosophers lyueden,
 And wolde wel examene hem—· wonder me thynketh! 116
 Lord leyue that these preestes · leelly seyn here masses,
 That thei oucrhuppe nat for hast! · as ich hope thei do nat,
 Thogh hit suffise for oure sauacion · sothfast by-leyue;
 As clerkus in *Corpus-Christi* feste · syngen and reden, 120
 That *sola fides sufficit* · to saue with lewede people.

Ac yf preestes do her deuer wel · we shullen do the bettere.
 For Saresyns mowe be saued so · yf thei so by-leyuede,
 In the lengthyngē of here lyf · to leyue on holychurche.' 124
 'What is holychurche, frend?' quoth ich · 'Charite,' he seyde,
 'Lyf, and Loue, and Leaute · in o by-leyue and lawe,
 A loue-knotte of leaute · and of leel by-leyue,
 Alle kynne cristene · cleuyngē on o wyl, 128
 With-oute gyle and gabbyngē · gyue and selle and lene.
 Loue lawe with-oute leaute · lowable was it neuere;
 God lereth no lyf to loue · with-oute leel cause:
 Iewes, Gentiles, and Sarrasines · Iugen hem-selue 132
 That leeliche thei by-leyuen · and ȝut herc lawe dyuerseth;
 And on god that al by-gan · with goode herte thei honoureth,
 And either loueth, and bileuith · in on lord al-myȝti.
 Ac oure lorde loueth no loue · bote lawe be the cause; 136
 For lechours louen aȝen the lawe · and at the laste beeth dampned:
 And theeues louen, and leaute haten · and at the laste beeth
 hanged:

C. 108. hede EMIT; hete P. 109. versifie IFT; uersie P. 112. hus-
 shere P. a FT; and PEI; MG om. 116. *This line is supplied from M.*
 PEIFTG om. 119. ȝogh I; ȝoȝ E; ȝowh F; ȝhaw M; That P. suffise
 EFT; suffice IG; suffuse P. 126. (3rd) and M; & oo F; a PEIG. 127.
 A—knotte MFITG; And loue a knotte PE. 128. clyuyngē P. 133.
 dyuersep EMIFTG; dyuersen P. 135. *This line is from M; also in IFGT;*
 PE om. 138. louen and T; louyen and I; PEMFG om.; cf. ll. 137, 139.

And so may Sarasenes be saued · scribes and Jewes ;
 Allas thanne ! but owre loresmen · lyuen as thei leren vs, 384
 And, for her lyuynges, that lewed men · be the lother god agulten.
 For Sarasenes han somewhat · semynges to owre bileue,
 For thei loue and bileue · in o persone almyghty ;
 And we, lered and lewede · in on god bileueth. 388
 Ac one Makometh, a man · in mysbileue
 Brouȝte Sarasenes of Surre · and se in what manere.

B. 388. *After this R adds a line, which seems superfluous—Cristene and vn-cristene · on one god bileueth.*

And leelle men louen as lawe techeth · and loue ther-of aryseth,
The which is hefd of Charite · and hele of mannes soule. 140

*Dilige deum propter deum; id propter ueritatem est. Et
inimicum tuum propter mandatum; id propter legem est.*

Et amicum propter amorem; id est, propter caritatem.

Loue god, for he is good · and grounde of alle treuthe;
Loue thyn enemy entyerly · godes heste to ful-fille; 142

Loue thy frend that folweth thy wil · that is thy faire soule.

For whanne alle frendes failen · and fleen a-wey in deiyng,
Then suweth the thy soule · to sorwe other to ioye,

And ay hopeth eft to be · with here bodye atte laste 146

In murthe other in mornynge · and neuere eft to departe.

And that is Charite, my leue childe · to be cher ouer thi soule;
Contrarie hure nauht, as in conscience · yf thou wolt come to
heuene.'

'Wher Sarrasyns,' ich seyde · 'seo nat what is charite?' 150

'Hit may be that Sarrasyns hauen · a suche manere charite,
Louye, as by lawe of kynde · oure lord god al-mychty.

Hit is a kynde thyng, a creature · hus creatour to honoure;

For ther is no man that mynde hath · that ne meoketh hym
and by-secheth 154

To that lord that hym lyf lente · and lyfode him sendeth.

Ac meny manere men ther beoth · as Sarrasyns and Iewes,

Louyeth nat that lorde a-ryght · as by the Legende *Sanctorum*,
And lyuen oute of leel by-leyue · for thei leyue in a mene. 158

A man that hihte Makamede · for Messye thei hym heolde,

And after hus lerynge thei lyuen · and by lawe of kynde.

And when kynde hath hus cours · and no contrarye fyndeth,

Thenne is lawe lost · and lewete vnknownen. 162

Beaute sauns bounte · blessed was hit neuere,

Ne kynde *sauns cortisie* · in no contreye preysed.

Men fyndeth that Makamede · was a man ycrystned,

And a cardinal of court · a gret clerk with-alle, 166

And porsuede to haue be pope · pryns of holychurche;

And for he was lyke a Lussheborgh · ich leyue oure lord hym
lette. 168

C. 143. (3rd) by EIG; bi MFT; þe P. 150. Wher (for wheþer); written
Where IG; Where F; Were P; Wheþer ET. 155. sendeþ EMFG;
seyndeþ P. 162. vnknowyn P. 168. whas P. lousheborgh P.

This Makometh was a Crystene man · and for he moste nouȝte
be a pope,

In-to Surre he souȝte · and thorw his soutil wittes 392

Daunted a dowue · and day and nyȝte hir fedde;

The corne that she cropped · he caste it in his ere.

And if he amonge the people preched · or in places come,

Thanne wolde the coluer come · to the clerkes ere, 396

Menynge as after meet · thus Makometh hir enchaunted,

And dide folke thanne falle on knees · for he swore in his
prechyng,

That the coluer that come so · come fram god of heuene

As messenger to Makometh · men forto teche 400

And thus thorw wyles of his witte · and a whyte dowue,

Makometh in mysbileue · men and wommen brouȝte,

That lered there and lewed ȝit · lyuen on his lawes.

And sith owre saueoure suffred · the Sarasenes so bigiled,

Thorw a crystene clerke · acursed in his soule; 405

Ac for drede of the deth · I dar nouȝt telle treuthe,

How Englissh clerkes a coluer feden · that Coueityse hatte,

And ben manered after Makometh · that no man vseth treuth.

Ancres and hermytes · and monkes and freres 409

Peren to apostles · thorw her parfit lyuyng.

Wolde neuere the faithful fader · that his ministres sholde

Of tyrauntz that teneth trewe men · taken any almesse, 412

But done as Antony did · Dominik and Fraunceys,

Benet and Bernarde · the which hem firste tauȝte

To lyue bi litel and in lowe houses · by lele mennes almesse.

Grace sholde growe and be grene · thorw her good lyuyng,

And folkes sholde fynde · that ben in dyuerse sykenesse, 417

The better for her byddynges · in body and in soule.

Her preyeres and her penaunces · to pees shulde bryng

Alle that ben at debate · and bedemen were trewe; 420

Petite et accipietis, etc.

Salt saueth catel · seggen this wyues;

Vos estis sal terre, etc.

The heuedes of holicherche · and thei holy were,

Cryst calleth hem salt · for Crystene soules;

Et si sal euanuerit, in quo salietur.

For-thi souhte he in-to Surrye · and sotiled hou he myghte
 Beo mayster ouer alle tho men · and on this manere wroughte.
 He endauntede a douue · day and nyght here fedde ;
 In aither of hus eris · pryueliche he hadde 172
 Corn, that the coluer eet · when he cam in places.
 And in what place he prechede · and the people tauhte,
 Then sholde the coluere come · to the clerkes ere,
 Menyngge as after mete · thus Makamede here enchauntede. 176
 And whan the coluer kam thus · thenne knelede the people,
 For Makamede to men swor · 'hit was a messenger of heuene,
 And sothly god self · in suche a coluere lyknesse
 Tolde hym and tauhte hym · hou to teche the people.' 180
 Thus Makamede in mysbyleyue · man and womman brouhte,
 And in hus lore thei leyuen ȝut · as wel lered as lewede.
 And sutthe oure sauour suffrede · suche a fals Crystine
 Deceyue so Sarrasyns · sothly me thynketh, 184
 Holy men, as ich hope · thorw help of the holy gost,
 Sholde conuerten hem to Crist · and Cristendom to take.

C. 169. southte P. sotiled I; sotilide T; sotelede G; sotelde M; sotide
 (*wrongly*) PE. 176. hus mete PE; *but* MIT *om.* hus. 177. knelede
 MIT; kneled F; knewele P. 186. (*and*) to IMFT; PEG *om.*

Ac fresshe flesshe other fisshe · whan it salt failleth, 424
It is vnsauory, for soth · ysothe or ybake.

So is mannes soule sothly · that seeth no good ensaumple
Of hem of holycherche · that the heigh weye shulde teche,
And be gyde, and go bifore · as a good baneoure, 428
And hardy hem that bihynde ben · and ȝiue hem good euydence.

Elleuene holy men · al the worlde torned
In-to lele byleue; · the liztloker, me thynketh,
Shulde al maner men · we han so manye maistres, 432
Prestes and prechoures · and a pope aboue,
That goddes salt shulde be · to saue mannes soule.

Al was hethenesse some tyme · Ingelond and Wales,
Til Gregory gerte clerkes · to go here and preche. 436
Austyn at Caunterbury · crystened the kyng,
And thorw myracles, as men may rede · al that marche he torned
To Cryst and to Crystendome · and crosse to honoure,
And fulled folke faste · and the faith tauȝte 440
More thorw miracles · than thorw moche prechyng,
As wel thorw his werkes · as with his holy wordes,
And seyde hem what fullynge · and faith was to mene.

Cloth that cometh fro the weuyng · is nouȝt comly to were,
Tyl it is fulled vnder fote · or in fullyng-stokkes, 445
Wasshen wel with water · and with taseles cracched,
Ytoked, and ytented · and vnder tailloures hande.
And so it fareth by a barne · that borne is of wombe, 448
Til it be crystened in Crystes name · and confermed of the bisshop.
It is hethene as to heueneward · and helpelees to the soule.

Hethene is to mene after heth · and vntiled erthe;
As in wilde wilderness · wexeth wilde bestes, 452
Rude and vnresonable · rennenge with-out croperes.

ȝe mynnen wel how Matheu seith · how a man made a feste;
He fedde hem with no venysoun · ne fesauntes ybake,
But with foules that fram hym nolde · but folwed his whistellynge;

Ecce altilia mea et omnia parata sunt, etc.;

And wyth calues flesshe he fedde · the folke that he loued. 457
The calfe bytokeneth clenness · in hem that kepeth lawes.
For as the cow thorw kynde mylke · the calf norissheth til
an oxe,

B. 453. croperes C; croperis B; cropers O; cropiers W; creperes L
454. mynnen W; me *mgly*).

[*Not in C-Text.*]

So loue and lewte · lele men susteyneth, 460
 And maydenes and mylde men · mercy desiren ;
 Riȝt as the cow-calf · coueyteth swete mylke,
 So don riȝtful men · mercy and treuthe.
 [And by the hande-fedde foules · his folk vnderstonde, 464
 That loth ben to louye · with-uten lernynge of ensaumples.
 Riȝt as capones in a court · cometh to mennes whistlynge,
 In menyngē after mete · folweth men that whistlen,
 Riȝt so rude men · that litel reson cunneth, 468
 Louen and by-leuen · by lettred mennes doynge,
 And by here wordes and werkes · wenen and trowen.
 And, as tho foules to fynde · fode after whistlynge,
 So hope thei to haue · heuene thoruz her whistlynge. 472
 And by the man that made the feste · the mageste bymeneth ;
 That is, god of his grace · gyueth al men blisse ;
 With wederes and with wondres · he warneth vs with a whistlere,
 Where that his wille is · to worschipen vs alle, 476
 And feden vs and festen vs · for euere-more at ones.]

Ac who beth that excuseth hem · that aren persounes and prestes,

That heuedes of holycherche ben · that han her wille here,
 With-oute trauaille, the tithe del · that trewemen biswynkyn,
 Thei wil be wroth for I write thus · ac to witnesse I take
 Bothe Mathew and Marke · and *Memento-domine-Dauid* ; 482
Ecce audiuius eam in Effrata, etc.

What pope or prelate now · perfourneth that Cryst hiȝte,
Ite in vniversum mundum et predicate, etc.?

Allas! that men so longe · on Makometh shulde byleue, 484
 So many prelates to preche · as the pope maketh,
 Of Nazareth, of Nynyue · of Neptalim, and Damaske,
 That thei ne went as Cryst wisseth · sithen thei wilne a name,
 To be pastours and preche · the passioun of Iesus, 488
 And as hym-self seyde · so to lyue and deye ;

Bonus pastor animam suam ponit, etc. ;

And seyde it in sauacioup · of Sarasenes and other.
 For Crystene and vncristene · Cryst seide to prechoures,
Ite vos in vineam meam.

B. 460. L repeats and.
Ecce—Effrata in R only.
 haue C; wolen han-

464-477. These lines are in R only. 482.
 487 · " in R; wil a L; wille haue W; wol

Alas! that men so longe · on Makamede by-leyuen,
 So meny prelates to preche · as the pope maketh, 188
 Of Nazareth, of Nynyve · of Neptalym, of Damaske,
 That thei ne wendeth the wey · as holy writ biddeth,
Ite in universum mundum · sutthe 3e wilneth the name
 To be prelates, and preche · the passion of Iesus, 191
 And as hym-self seyde · so lyue and deye;
Bonus pastor animam suam ponit pro ouibus suis.

C. 188. prelates IFTG; priestes PE. pope EMIFTG; people (!) P.
 190. biddith P.

And sith that this Sarasenes · scribes, and Iuwes 492
 Han a lippe of owre byleue · the liztloker, me thynketh,
 Thei. shulde torne, who so trauaille wolde · to teche hem of
 the trinite,

Querite et inuenietis, etc.

It is reuth to rede · how riztwis men lyued,
 How thei defouled her flessch · forsoke her owne wille, 496
 Fer fro kitth and fro kynne · yuel-yclothed ȝeden,
 Badly ybedded · no boke but conscience,
 Ne no richchesse but the rode · to reioyse hem inne ;

Absit nobis gloriari, nisi in cruce domini nostri, etc.

And tho was plente and pees · amonges pore and riche ;
 And now is routhe to rede · how the red noble 501
 Is reuerenced or the rode · receyued for the worthier
 Than Crystes crosse, that ouer-cam · deth and dedly synne !
 And now is werre and wo · and who so 'why' axeth, 504
 For coueityse after crosse · the croune stant in golde.
 Bothe riche and religious · that rode thei honoure,
 That in grotes is ygraue · and in golde nobles.
 For coueityse of that crosse · men of holykirke 508
 Shul tourne as Templeres did · the tyme approacheth faste.
 Wyte ȝe nouȝt, wyse men · how tho men honoured
 More tresore than treuthe? · I dar nouȝt telle the sothe ;
 Resoun and riztful dome · tho religious demed. 512
 Rigt so, ȝe clerkes · for ȝowre coueityse, ar longe,
 Shal thei demen *dos ecclesie* · and ȝowre pryde depose :

Deposuit potentes de sede, etc.

ȝif knyȝthod and kynde wytte · and comune conscience
 Togideres loue lelly · leueth it wel, ȝe bisshopes, 516
 The lordeship of londes · for euere shal ȝe lese,
 And lyuen as *Leuitici* · as owre lorde ȝow techeth,

Per primicias et decimas.

Whan Costantyn of curteysye · holykirke dowed
 With londes and ledes · lordeshipes and rentes, 520
 An angel men herde · an heigh at Rome crye,
 ' *Dos ecclesie* this day · hath ydronke venym,
 And tho that han Petres powere · arn apoysoned alle.'
 A medecyne mote ther-to · that may amende prelates, 524
 That sholden preye for the pees ; · possessioun hem letteth,

Hit is reuthe to rede · hou ryght holy men lyueden,
 How thei defouleden here fleessh · for-soken here owen wil,
 Fer fro kuth and fro kyn · vuel-clothed ȝeoden, 196
 Baddeliche beddyd · no book bote here conscience,
 Nother richesse bote the rode · to reioysen hem inne;

Absit nobis gloriari nisi in cruce domini nostri Iesu Christi.

And tho was pees and plente · a-mong poure and riche;
 And now is reuthe to rede · hou the rede noble 200
 Ys yreuerenced by-fore the rode · and receyuyd for the worthier
 To a-mende and to make · as with men of holichurche,
 Than Cryst, other croys that ouercam · deth and dedly synne!
 And now is werre and wo · and ho so 'whi' asketh, 204
 For couetyse after a croys · the croune stant in golde.
 Bothe riche and religiouse · that rode thei honouren
 That in grotes is y-graue · and in gold nobles.
 For couetyse of that croys · clerkes of holychurche 208
 Schullen ouerturne as Templers duden · the tyme aprocheth faste.
 Mynne ȝe nat, lettered men · hou tho men honourede
 More tresour than treuthe? · ich dar nat telle the sothe
 How tho corsede Crystine · catel and richesse worshepeden;
 Reyson and riztful dome · the religious dammede. 213
 Right so, ȝe clerkus, ȝoure couetise · er come ouht longe,
 Shal dampne *dos ecclesie* · and depose ȝow for ȝoure pruyde;

Deposuit potentes de sede.

Yf knyȝt-hod and kynde wit · and the comune and conscience
 To-gederes louen leelliche · leyueth hit wel, bisshopes, 217
 The lordshup of londes · leese ȝe shulle for euere,
 And lyuen as *Leuitici* dude · and as our lord ȝow techeth,

Per primicias et decimas.

Whenne Constantyn of hus cortesy · holykirke dowede 220
 With londes and leedes · lordshepes and rentes,
 An angel men hurde · an hih at Rome crye—
 ' *Dos ecclesie* this day · hath ydronke venym,
 And tho that han Petres power · aren poysoned alle.' 224
 A medecine moste ther-to · that myghte amende the prelates,
 That sholden preye for the pees · and possession hem letteth;

C. 196. Feer P. 198. reioyesen P. *nobis* IG; *vobis* T; *nos* PEM.
 211. þan IMETG; P om. 213. relious (*for* religious) P. 216. Hyf
 (*for* Yf) P. knyȝt P. whit (*for* wit) P. 218. þe EMITG; To (*wrongly*)
 P. 220. kirke IT; churche PEF G.

Take her landes, ȝe lordes · and let hem lyue by dymes.

If possessioun be poyoun · and inparfit hem make,

Good were to dischargen hem · for holicherche sake, 528
And purgen hem of poyoun · or more perile falle.

ȝif presthod were parfit · the peple sholde amende,
That contrarien Crystes lawe · and Crystendome dispise.

For al paynymes prayeth · and parfitly bileueth 532
In the holy grete god · and his grace thei asken,
And make her mone to Makometh · her message to shewe.

B. 530. solde (*for* sholde) L. 532. paynymes WCROB; paynym L.

Taketh here londes, ȝe lordes · and leet hem lyue by dymes,
Yf ȝe kynges coueyten · in Cristene pees to lyuen. 228

For yf posession be poyson · and inparfyt hem make,
The heuedes of holychurche · and tho that be vnder hem,
Hit were charite to deschargen hem · for holychurches sake,
And purge hem of the olde poyson · ere more perel falle. 232

For were preest-hod more parfyt · that is, the pope formest,
That with moneye menteyneth men · to werren vp-on cristine,
A-ȝens the lore of oure lorde · as seynt Luk wytnesseth,

Michi uindictam, et ego retribuam, dicit dominus, &c.,

Hus prayers with hus pacience · to pees sholde brynge 236
Alle londes to loue · and that in a lytel tyme;

The pope with alle preestes · *pax-uobis* sholde make!
And take hede hou Makamede · thorwe a mylde doue,
He hald al Surrye as hym-self wolde · and Sarasyns in quyetē;
Nouht thorw manslauht and mannes strengthe · Makamede hadde
the mastrie, 241

Bote thorw pacience and pryuy gyle · he was prynce ouer hem
alle.

In suche manere, me thynketh · moste the pope,
Prelates, and preestes · prayen and by-seche 244

Deuowtliche day and nyȝt · and with-drawe hem fro synne,
And crye to Crist that he wolde · hus coluere sende,
The whiche is the holy gost · that out of heuene descendede,
To make a perpetuel pees · by-twyne the prynce of heuene 248
And alle manere of men · that on this molde lybbeth.

Yf preest-hod were parfit and preyede thus · the people sholde
amende,

That now contrarien Cristes lawes · and Cristendom despisen.
For sutthe that thes Sarasyns · scribes, and thes Iewes 252
Hauen a lippe of oure by-leyue · the lightloker, me thynketh,
Thei sholde turne, who so trauayle wolde · and of the Trinite
techen hem.

For alle paynymes preyen · and parfitliche by-leyuen
In the grete heye god · and hus grace asken, 256
And maken here mone to Makamede · here message to shewe.

C. 229. inparfyt P. 232. oolde P. 233. parfyt P. 235. *et—&c.*
is in F only. 241. mannes I; manis T; PEMFG om. 244. Prelatis P.
246. seynde (*for sende*) P. 249. of MFT; P om. 254. who so IT;
pat PEMF.

Thus in a faith lyueth that folke · and in a false mene, 535
 And that is routhe for riȝtful men · that in the rewme wonyen,
 And a peril to the pope · and prelatis that he maketh,
 That bere bisshopes names · of Bedleem and Babiloigne ;
 [Whan the heye kynge of heuene · sent his sone to erthe,
 Many miracles he wrouȝte · man for to turne ; 540
 In ensauple that men schulde se · that by sadde resoun
 Men miȝt nouȝt be saued · but thorū mercy and grace,
 And thorū penaunce and passion · and parfit bylef ;
 And by-cam man of a mayde · and *metropolitanus*, 544
 And baptised and bishoped · with the blode of his herte
 Alle that wilned, and wolde · with inne-wit by-leue it.
 Many a seint sytthen · hath soffred to deye,
 Al for to enforme the faith · in fele contreyes deyeden, 548
 In Ynde and in Alisaundre · in Ermonyne and in Spayne,
 In delfol deth deyeden · for there faith sake ;
 In sauacion of the fayth · seynt Thomas was ymartired,
 Amonges vn-kende Cristene · for Cristes loue he deyede, 552
 And for the riȝt of al this reume · and al reumes Cristene.
 Holy cherche is honoured · heȝȝliche thorū his deyng,
 He is a forbysene to alle bishopes · and a briȝt myroure,
 And souereyneliche to suche · that of Surrye bereth the name,]
 That hippe aboute in Engelsonde · to halwe mennes auteres,
 And crepe amonges curatoures · and confessen ageyne the lawe,

Nolite mittere falcem in messem alienam, etc.

Many man for Crystes loue · was martired in Romanye 559
 Er any Crystendome was knowe there · or any crosse honoured.

Euery bisshop that bereth crosse · by that he is holden,
 Thorw his prouynce to passe · and to his peple to shewe hym,
 Tellen hem and techen hem · on the trinite to bileue,
 And feden hem with gostly fode · and nedy folke to fynden.
 Ac Ysaie of ȝow speketh · and Osysas bothe, 565
 That no man schuld be bischope · but if he hadde bothe,
 Bodily fode and gostly fode · and gyue there it nedeth ;

*In domo mea non est panis neque vestimentum, et ideo nolite
 constituere me regem.*

B. 539-556. These lines, found in R only, properly belong to the C-text.
 543. R has byle for bylef, by mistake. 545. bischiued (for bishoped) R.
 546. woled (for wolde) R. 558. and WR ; LCOB om. 560. Er W ;
 Ar R ; Er ar LC. 564-567. From and nedy (564) to fode (567) is in R only ;
 omitted in LWCOB, probably owing to the repetition of gostly fode.

Thus in a faith lyueth that folke · and in a false mene ;
 And that is reuthe for the ryghtful men · that in the reame
 wonyeth,
 And perel for the prelates · that the pope maketh ; 260
 That bereth name of Neptalym · of Nynyue and of Damaske.
 For when the holy kyng of heuene · sende hus sone to erthe,
 Meny myracles he wrouhte · man for to turne,
 In ensample that men · sholde seo by sad reyson, 264
 That men myghte nat be sauede · bote thorw mercy and grace,
 And thorw penaunce and passioun · and parfyt by-leyue ;
 And by-cam a man of a mayde · and *metropolitamus*,
 And baptisede, and busshoppede · with the blode of hus herte
 Alle that wilnede other wolde · with inwit by-leue hit. 269
 Meny seint sitthe · suffrede deth al-so ;
 For to enforme the faithe · ful wyde-where deyden,
 In Inde and in Alisaundrie · in Ermanye, in Spayne, 272
 And fro mysbyleue · meny man turnede.
 In sauacion of mannys saule · seynt Thomas of Caunterbury
 Among vnkynde Cristene · in holychurche was sleye,
 And alle holychurche · honoured for that deyinge. 276
 He is a forbusne to alle busshopes · and a bryzt myrour,
 And souereynliche to alle suche · that of Surrye bereth name ;
 And nat in Engelande to huppe abowte · and halewen menne auters,
 And crepe in a-monge curatours · and confessen a-zen the lawe ;
Nolite mittere falcem in messem alienam. 280
 Meny man for Crystes loue · was martred a-móng Romaines
 Er Cristendome were knowe ther · other eny croys honoured.
 Eueriche busshope, by the lawe · sholde buxumliche wende,
 And pacientliche, thorgh hus prouynce · and to hus peple hym
 shewe, 284
 Feden hem and fillen hem · and fere hem fro synne ;
In baculi forma · sit presul hec tibi norma,
Fer, trahe, punge gregem · seruando per omnia legem ;
 And enchaunte hem to charite · on holychurche to be-leyue. 288

C. 259. ryghtful IFT ; ryght PE. 260. *This line is from M ; also in IFT ;*
 PE omit. 261. pat IMFT ; And PE. 262. eerthe P. 266. parfyt P.
 268. an (*for* and) P. 269. inwit FG ; inwhyt P. 274. Cauntelbury P.
 276. honourede P. 277. bryzthe P. 279. engelounde P. 280. curatours
 MIFT ; creatours PE. confesson P. *alienam messem* P. 282. wher (*for*
 were) P. honourede P. 283. weynde P. 285. fillen M ; follen I ;
 fullen T ; fulle FG ; folwen PE.

Ozias seith for such · that syke ben and fieble, 568

Inferle omnes decimas in oreum meum, ut sit cibus in domo mea.

Ac we Crystene creatures · that on the crosse byleuen,

Aren ferme as in the faith · goddes forbode elles !

And han clerkes to kepen vs ther-inne · and hem that shal
come after vs.

And Iewes lyuen in lele lawe · owre lorde wrote it hym-selue,
In stone, for it stydfast was · and stonde sholde eue— 573

Dilige deum et proximum · is parfit Iewen lawe—

And toke it Moyses to teche men · til Messye come ;

And on that lawe thei lyuen ȝit · and leten it the beste. 576

And ȝit knewe thei Cryst · that Crystendome tauȝte,

For a parfit prophete · that moche peple saued

Of selcouth sores · thei seyen it ofte,

Bothe of myracles and meruailles · and how he men fested 580

With two fisshes and fyve loues · fyue thousande peple ;

And bi that maungerye men miȝte wel se · that Messye he semed.

And whan he luft vp Lazar · that layde was in graue,

And vnder stone ded and stanke · with styf voys hym called,

Lazare, veni foras,

Dede hym rise and rowme · riȝt bifor the Iuwes. 585

Ac thei seiden and sworn · with sorcerye he wrouȝte,

And studyeden to stroyen hym · and stroyden hemself ;

And thorw his pacyence her powere · to pure nouȝt he brouȝte ;

Pacientes vincunt.

Danyel of her vndoynge · deuyned and seyde,

Cum sanctus sanctorum veniat, cessabit vnixio vestra.

And ȝet wenen tho wrecches · that he were *pseudo-propheta*,

And that his lore be lesynges · and lakken it alle, 591

And hopen that he be to come · that shal hem releue,

Moyses eft, or Messye · here maisteres ȝet deuyneth.

Ac Pharesewes and Sarasenes · Scribes and Grekis 594

Aren folke of on faith · the fader god thei honouren ;

And sitthen that the Sarasenes · and also the Iewes

Konne the firste clause of owre bileue · *Credo in deum patrem
omnipotentem,*

Prelates of Crystene prouynces · shulde preue, if thei myȝte, 598

Lere hem litlum and lytlum · *et in Iesum Christum filium,*

B. 568. *sit* O ; LWCROB *om.*
581. *an* (*for and*) L.

579. *seyen* RB ; *seyne* L ; *seyn* C.

For as the kynde is of a knyzt · other for a kynge to be take,
 And among here enemys · in mortels bateles
 To be culled and ouercome · the comune to defende;
 So is the kynde of a curatour · for Cristes loue to preche, 292
 And deye for hus dere children · to destroye dedly synne;

Bonus pastor;

And nameliche ther as lewede lyuen · and no lawe knowen.
 Ac we Crystine conneth the lawe · and hauen of oure tounge
 Busshopes and bookes · the byleyue to teche. 296

Iuwes lyuen in the lawe · that oure lord tauhte,
 Moyses to be maister ther-of · til Messie come,
 And in that lawe thei leyue · and leten hit for the beste.

And 3ut knewe thei Crist · that Cristendome tauhte, 300
 And for a parfyte prophete · that muche people sauede,
 And of selcouthe sores · sauede men ful ofte;
 By the myracles that he made · Messie he semede,
 Tho he lyfte vp Lazar · that leyde was in graue, 304
Quatriduanus cold · quik dude hym walke.

Iuwes seyden, that hit seyn · with sorcerie he wrouhte,
 And stodieden hou to struyen him · and struyeden hem-selue,
 And here power thourh hus pacience · to pure nouht brouhte.

And 3ut thei seien sothliche · and so doth the Sarrasyns, 309
 That Iesus was bote a Iogelour · a Iaper a-monge the comune,
 And a sophistre of sorcerie · and *pseudo-propheta*,
 And hus lore was lesynge · and lacken hit alle, 312
 And hopen that he be to comynge · that shal hem releue;
 Moyses other Makemedede · here maistres deuineth;
 And haueth suspecion to be saf · bothe Sarrasyns and Iewes,
 Thorwe Moyses and Makamedede · and myghte of god that mad al.

Now sytthe that these Sarrasyns · and al-so the Iewes 317
 Conne the ferste clause of oure by-leyue · *Credo in deum patrem*,
 Prelates and preestes · sholde preoue, yf thei myghte,
 Lere hem lytulum and lytulum · *et in Iesum Christum, filium*
eius, 320

C. 289. kny3th P. 290. And MIT; Al FG; PE om. 292. a curatour
 EMIF; creatour P. 293. destroye IMFT; distrye P. 295. comeþ (*for*
 conneþ) P. 300. knewe EMT; knowe PI. 303. myracles EIF;
 meracles P. 307. stodieden IT; fondeden PEM. him MF; hym T; hem
 PEIG. 308. brouhten (*for* brouhte) P. 309. 3ut MG; 3it IF; PE om.
 317. theese P. an P. 320. *The first lytulam is miswritten lytulhum in* P.

Tyl thei couthe speke and spelle · *et in spiritum sanctum*, 600
 And rendren it and recorden it · with *remissionem peccatorum*,
Carnis resurreccionem, et vitam eternam. Amen.

PASSUS XVI.

Passus xvj^m, et primus de Dobet.

‘**N**OW faire falle 3ow!’ quod I tho · ‘for 3owre faire shewynge,
 For Haukynnes loue the actyf man · euere I shal 3ow louye;
 Ac 3et I am in a were · what charite is to mene.’
 ‘It is a ful trye tree,’ quod he · ‘trewly to telle. 4
 Mercy is the more ther-of · the myddel stokke is Reuthe.
 The leues ben Lele-Wordes · the lawe of Holycherche,
 The blosmes beth Boxome-Speche · and Benygne-Lokynge;
 Pacience hatte the pure tre · and pore symple of herte, 8
 And so, thorw god and thorw good men · groweth the frute Charite.’
 ‘I wolde trauaille,’ quod I, ‘this tree to se · twenty hundreth myle,
 And forto haue my fylle of that frute · forsake al other saulee.
 Lorde,’ quod I, ‘if any wizte wyte · whider-oute it groweth?’ 12
 ‘It groweth in a gardyne,’ quod he · ‘that god made hym-seluen,
 Amyddes mannes body · the more is of that stokke;
 Herte hatte the herber · that it in groweth,
 And *Liberum-Arbitrium* · hath the londe to ferme, 16
 Vnder Piers the Plowman · to pyken it and to weden it.’
 ‘Piers the Plowman!’ quod I tho · and al for pure ioye
 That I herde nempne his name · anone I swouned after,
 And laye longe in a lone dreame · and atte laste me thouzte, 20
 That Pieres the Plowman · al the place me shewed,
 And bad me toten on the tree · on toppe and on rote.
 With thre pyles was it vnder-pizte · I perceyued it sone.
 ‘Pieres,’ quod I, ‘I preye the · whi stonde thise piles here?’ 24
 ‘For wyndes, wiltow wyte,’ quod he · ‘to witen it fram fallynge;
Cum ceciderit iustus, non collidetur; quia Dominus supponit
manum suam;

B. 11. saulee is glossed by edulium. 13. a WCROB; L om. 15. herber WCO; erber LR; herbergh B.

Til thei couthe speke and spelle · *et in spiritum sanctum*, 321
 Recorden hit and rendren hit · wyth *remissionem peccatorum*,
Carnis resurrectionem, et uitam eternam. Amen.
Hic explicit passus primus de Dobet.

PASSUS XIX.

Hic incipit passus secundus de Dobet.

‘**L**EUE *Liberum Arbitrium*,’ quath ich · ‘ich leyue, as ich
 hope,
 Thou couthest telle and teche me · to Charite, ich leyue?’
 Then louh *Liberum Arbitrium* · and ladde me forth with tales,
 Til we comen in-to a contree · *Cor-hominis* hit hyhte, 4
 Herber of alle pryuytees · and of holynesse.
 Euene in the myddes · an ympe, as hit were,
 That hihte *Ymago-dei* · graciousliche hit growede. 7
 Thenne gan ich asken what hit hyhte · and he me sone tolde—
 ‘The tree hihte Trewe-loue,’ quath he · ‘the trinite hit sette;
 Thorgh louely lokynge hit lyueth · and launceth vp blossemes,
 The whiche blosmes burnes · Benygne-speche callen; 11
 And ther-of cometh a good frut · the which men callen Werkes
 Of holynesse, of hendynesse · of help-hym-that-neodeth,
 The whiche is callid *Caritas* · Cristes owen fode,
 And solaceth alle soules · sorghful in purgatorie.’
 ‘Now, certes,’ ich seide · and sykede for ioie, 16
 ‘Ich thonke 3ow a thowsend sythes · that 3e me hider kende;
 And suththen that 3e fowche-saue · to seye me what hit hihte.’
 And he thonked me tho · bote thenne took ich hede, 19
 Hit hadde shoriers to shoue hit vp · thre shides of o lengthe,
 And of o kynne colour · and o kynde, as me thouhte,
 All thre yliche longe · and yliche large.
 Muche meruailede me · on what more thei growede;
 And este askede of hym · of what wode thei were? 24
 ‘Thees thre shoryeres,’ quath he · ‘that bereth vp this plonte,
 Thei by-tokneth trewely · the Trinite of heuene;

C. 321. spelle MIT; spele PFG. et; misuritten and P.
 Passus XIX. 17. 3ow MIT; 3e PEFG. 18. foweche P. 20. lengþye P.

And, in blowyng-tyme, abite the floures · but if this piles helpe.
 The Worlde is a wykked wynde · to hem that wolden treuthe,
 Coueityse cometh of that wynde · and crepeth amonge the leues,
 And forfret neigh the frute · thorw many faire siztes. 29

Thanne with the firste pyle I palle hym down · that is, *potencia-
 Dei-Patris*.

The Flesshe is a fel wynde · and in flouryng-tyme
 Thorw lykyng and lustes · so loude he gynneth blowe, 32
 That it norissbeth nice siztes · and some tyme wordes,
 And wikked werkes ther-of · wormes of synne,
 And forbiteth the blosmes · rizt to the bare leues.

Thanne sette I to the secounde pile · *sapiencia-Dei-patris*, 36
 That is, the passioun and the power · of owre prynce Iesu,
 Thorw preyeres and thorw penaunces · and goddes passioun in
 mynde,

I saue it til I se it ryphen · and somdel y-fruited.
 And thanne fondeth the Fende · my fruit to destruye, 40
 With alle the wyles that he can · and waggeth the rote,
 And casteth vp to the croppe · vnkynde neighbors,
 Bakbiteres breke-cheste · brawleres and chideres,
 And leith a laddre there-to · of lesynges aren the ronges, 44
 And feccheth away my floures sumtyme · afor bothe myn eyhen.
 Ac *Liberum-Arbitrium* · letteth hym some tyme,
 That is lieutenant to loken it wel · by leue of my-selue ;

Videatis qui peccat in spiritum sanctum, nunquam remittetur, etc. ;

Hoc est idem, qui peccat per liberum arbitrium non repugnat.
 Ac whan the Fende and the Flesshe · forth with the Worlde 48
 Manasen byhynde me · my fruit for to fecche,
 Thanne *Liberum-Arbitrium* · laccheth the thridde plante,
 And palleth adown the pouke · purelich thorw grace
 And helpe of the holy goste · and thus haue I the maystrie.' 52

‘Now faire falle 3ow, Pieres,’ quod I · ‘so faire 3e discryuen
 The powere of this postes · and her propre myzte.

Ac I have thouztes a threve · of this thre piles,
 In what wode thei woxen · and where that thei growed; 56
 For alle ar thei aliche longe · none lasse than other,
 And to my mynde, as me thinketh · on o more thei growed,

Thre persons in-departable · perpetuel were euere,
 Of o wyl, of o wit · and here-with ich kepe 28
 The frut of this faire tree · fro thre wykkede wyndes,
 And fro fallyng of stok · hit faille nouht of hus myghte.
 The Worlde is a wykkede wynde · to hem that wolde treuthe;
 Covetyse cometh of that wynde · and *Caritas* hit abiteth; 32
 And for-freteth that frut · with manye fayre syghtes;
 And with the ferste plaunke ich palle hym doune · *Potencia-dei-*
patris.

Thanne is Flessh a fel wynde · in flouryng-tyme;
 Thorgh lecherie and lustes · so loude he gynneth blowe, 36
 That hit norischeth nyce syztes · and som tyme wordes,
 And menye wykkede wormes · workes of synne,
 And al for-bit *Caritas* · to the bare stalke;
 Thanne sette ich the secunde plaunke · *Sapiencia-dei-patris,* 40
 The which is the passion and penaunce · and the parfytnesse
 of Iesus,

And ther-with ich warde hit other-whyle · til hit wexe rype.
 Thenne fondeth the Feende · my frut to destruye,
 And leith a laddere ther-to · of lesynges be the ronges; 44
 With alle the wyles that he can · waggeth the roote
 Thorw bak-byters and braweleres · and thorwe bolde chyderes,
 And shaketh hit; ne were hit vnder-shored · certes hit sholde
 nat stande.

So these lourdeines litheren ther-to · that alle the leues fallen, 48
 And feccheth a-way this frut som tyme · by-fore bothe myn eyen.
 Thenne palle ich a-downe the pouke · with the thridde shoryere,
 The whiche is *Spiritus-sanctus* · and soth-fast byleyue,
 And that is grace of the Holy Gost; · and thus gat ich the
 mastre.' 52

Ich totide vp-on that tree tho · and thenne tok ich hede,
 Whether the frut were faire · other foul to loken on.
 And the frut was wonder fair · non fairer beo myghte;
 Ac in thre degrees hit grew · gret ferly me thouhte, 56
 And askede tho 'yf hit were · al of on kynde?'

'Ȝe, certes,' he seide · 'and sothliche thow leyue hit.
 Hit is al of o kynde · and that shal ich prouen;

O. 31. wordle P. 32. *caritas* hit abiteþ ITG; hit betep *caritas* P.
 35. fel MFTG; feel P. 37. norischeþ IEG; norceþ P. 43. fonndeþ P.
 44. leithe P. 47. shorede P. 48. þees P. 54. wher (*for were*) P.

And of o gretnesse · and grene of greyne thei semen.'

'That is soth,' seide Pieres · 'so it may bifalle; 60
I shal telle the as tite · what this tree hatte.

The grounde there it groweth · Goodnesse it hizte,
And I haue tolde the what hizte the tree · the Trinite it meneth' —
And egrelich he loked on me · and ther-fore I spared 64
To asken hym any more ther-of · and badde hym ful fayre
To discreue the fruit · that so faire hangeth.

'Here now bineth,' quod he tho · 'if I nede hadde,
Matrymonye I may nyme · a moiste fruit with-alle. 68
Thanne contenance is nerre the croppe · as calewey bastarde,
Thanne bereth the croppe kynde fruite · and clenneste of alle,
Maydenhode, angeles peres · and rathest wole be ripe,
And swete with-oute swellyng · soure worth it neuere.' 72

Ac somme ar swettere than some · and sonnere wollen rotye. 60
 Men may seo on an appul-treo · meny tyme and ofte,
 Of o kynne apples · aren nat yliche grete,
 Ne of sewynge smale · ne of o swetnesse swete.
 Tho that sitten in the sonne-syde · sonner aren rype, 64
 Swettour and saueriour · and also more grettoure
 Than tho that selde hauen the sonne · and sitten in the north-
 half;
 And so hit fareth sothly · sone, by oure kynde.
 Adam was as tree · and we aren as hus apples, 68
 Somme of ows sothfast · and some variable,
 Somme litel and some large · like apples of kynde.
 As weddede men and wedewes · and ryȝt worthy maidenēs,
 The whiche the *Seynt Esprit* seweth · the sonne of al heuene, 72
 Conforteth hem in here continence · that lyuen in contemplacion,
 As monkes and monyeles · men of holichurche;
 These hauen hete of the Holi Gost · as crop of treo the sonne.
 Wedewes and wedeweres · that here owen wil for-saken, 76
 And chast leden here lyf · ys lyf of contemplacion,
 And more lykyng to oure lorde · than lyue as kynde asketh,
 And folwe that the flessch wole · and frut forth brynge,
 That lettered men in here langage · *Actiua Uita* callen.' 80
 'Ȝe, syre,' ich seide, 'and sitthen · ther aren bote two lyues
 That oure lorde a-loweth · as lered men ous techeth,
 That is *Actiua Uita* · and *Uita Contemplatiua*,
 Whi groweth this frut in thre degrees?' · 'for a good skyle,' he
 seide; 84
 'Her by-neothe ich may nyme · yf ich neode hadde,
 Matrimonye, a moiste frut · that multiplieth the peple.
 Thenne a-boue is a betere frut · ac bothe two ben goode,
 Wedewehode, more worthier · than wedlok, as in heuene. 88
 Thanne is Virginite, more vertuous · and fairest as in heuene,
 For that is euene with angeles · and angeles peer.
 Hit was the furste frut · that the fader of heuene blessedede,
 And bad hit be of a bat of erthe · a man and a mayde; 92

C. 60. sannere P. 63. sewynge EIMT; sywynge P. o EIF; PMT om.
 66. ȝo MIFTG; P om. 67. sothly P. soone P. 71. ryȝth P. 72.
 sewep MI; sueth F; PE om. 73. hem MEITF; him P. 81. two FG;
 to PM. 85. hadde P. 86. multepliep P. 87. two ET; to P. 92.
 P om. 1st of.

I prayed Pieres to pulle adown · an apple, and he wolde,
 And suffre me to assaye · what sauoure it hadde.
 And Pieres caste to the croppe · and thanne comsed it to crye,
 And wagged Wydwehode · and it wepte after. 76
 And whan it meued Matrimoigne · it made a foule noyse,
 That I had reuth whan Piers rogged · it gradde so reufulliche.
 For euere as thei dropped adown · the deuel was redy,
 And gadred hem alle togideres · bothe grete and smale, 80
 Adam and Abraham · and Ysay the prophete,
 Sampson and Samuel · and seynt Iohan the baptiste;
 Bar hem forth boldely · no body hym letted,
 And made of holy men his horde · in *lymbo inferni*, 84
 There is derkenesse and drede · and the deuel maister.
 And Pieres for pure tene · that o pile he lau3te,
 And hitte after hym · happe how it myzte,
Filius, bi the Fader wille · and frenesse of *Spiritus Sancti*, 88
 To go robbe that raggeman · and reue the fruit fro hym.

And thanne spakke *Spiritus Sanctus* · in Gabriele's mouthe,
 To a mayde that hizte Marye · a meke thinge with-alle,
 'That one Iesus, a Iustice sone · moste Iouke in her chambre,

In menyngē that the faireste thyng · the furste thyng sholde
honoure,

And the clenest creature · creatour ferste knowe.

In kynges court and knyghtes · the clenest men and fairest
Shullen serue for the lord selue · so fareth god almyghty. 96

Maidenes and marteres · ministred hym her in erthe,

And in heuene both most pryue · and next hym by reson,

For the fairest frut · by-fore hym as of eorthe,

And swete with-oute swellinge · soure worth hit neuere.' 100

'This is a propre plonte,' quath ich · 'and pryueliche hit bloweth,

And bryngeth forth faire frut · folke of all nacion,

Bothe parfit and inparfit; · pure fayn ich wolde

A-saye what sauour hit hadde' · ich seide that tyme; 104

'Leue *Liberum-Arbitrium* · leet som lyf hit shake.'

A-non he het Elde · an hih for to clymbe,

And shaken hit sharply · the ripen sholden falle.

Elde clam towarde the crop · than comsede hit to crie; 108

He waggede Wedewehode · and hit wepte after;

He meuede Matrimonye · hit made a foule noyse.

For euere as Elde hadde eny doun · the deuel was wel redy,

And gederide hem alle to-gederis · bothe grete and smale, 112

Adam and Abraham · and Ysaye the prophete,

Sampson and Samuel · and seynt Iohan the baptist,

And bar hem forth baldely · no body tho hym lette,

And made of holy men hus horde · in *limbo inferni*, 116

Ther is derknesse and drede · and the deuel maister.

Thenne meuede hym mod · in *maiestate dei*,

That *Libera-Uoluntas-Dei* · lauhte the myddel shoriere,

And hitte after the fende · happe hou hit myghte. 120

Filius, by the faders wil · flegh with *Spiritus Sanctus*,

To ransake that rageman · and reue hym hus apples,

That fyrst man deceyuede · thorgh frut and false by-hest.

And thenne spake *Spiritus Sanctus* · in Gabrielis mouthe 124

To a mayde that hihte Marie · a meek thyng with alle,

That on Iesus, a Iustice sone · moste Iouken in hire chaumbre,

C. 101. plonte EFG; plante MIT; plente P. blewep P. 110. meeuēde P.
116. P *ins.* doun *after* limbo; see B-text. 117. derknesse EMFT; deornesse
(*sic*) P. 118. meouēde P. 119. mydel P. 121. fleyght (*for* flegh) P.
122. þat EMFTG; þe P. 125. To a EMFTG; To þat P. P *om.* and a.

Tyl *plenitudo temporis* · fully comen were, 93
 That Pieres fruit floured · and fel to be ripe.
 And thanne shulde Iesus Iuste there-fore · bi Iuggement of armes,
 Whether shulde fonge the fruit · the fende or hymselfue.' 96
 The mayde mydeliche tho · the messenger graunted,
 And seyde hendelich to hym · 'lo me, his hande-mayden
 For to worchen his wille · with-uten any synne;'

Ecce ancilla domini; fiat michi secundum verbum tuum, etc.

And in the wombe of that wenche · was he fourty wokes, 100
 Tyl he wex a faunt thorw her flesshe · and of fiztyng couthe,
 To haue y-fouzte with the fende · ar ful tyme come.
 And Pieres the Plowman · parceyued plenere tyme,
 And lered hym lechecrafte · his lyf for to saue, 104
 That though he were wounded with his enemye · to warisshe
 hym-self;

And did him assaye his surgerye · on hem that syke were,
 Til he was parfit practisoure · if any peril felle,
 And souzte oute the syke · and synful bothe, 108
 And salued syke and synful · bothe blynde and crokede,
 And comune wommen conuerted · and to good torned;

Non est sanis opus medicus, set infirmis, etc.

Bothe meseles and mute · and in the menysoun blody,
 Ofte he heled suche · he ne helde it for no maistrye, 112
 Saue tho he leched Lazar · that hadde yleye in graue,
Quatriduanus quelt; · quykke did hym walke.
 Ac as he made the maistrye · *mestus cepit esee*,
 And wepte water with his eyghen · there seyen it manye. 116
 Some that the sizte seyen · saide that tyme,
 That he was leche of lyf · and lorde of heigh heuene.
 Iewes Iangeled there-a-zeine · and Iugged lawes,
 And seide he wrouzte thorw wicchecrafte · and with the deueles
 mizte, 120

Demonium habes, etc.

Thanne ar 3e cherles,' quod Iesus · 'and 3owre children bothe,
 And Sathan 3owre saueoure · 3ow-selue now 3e witnessen.
 For I haue saued 3ow-self,' seith Cryst · 'and 3owre sones after,

B. 96. fonge WO; fonde LCRB. 99. *secundum*—*tuum* is in B only.
 107. if WCROBY; of L. felle CBY; fel O; fille W; fulle LR. 110.
infirmis O; the rest *in*'. 112. it WF m. 117. seyne L; see
 last line. 121. LWCY c' ierus).

Til *plenitudo temporis* · tyme ycome were,
 That Elde felde este that frut · other fulle to be rype, 128
 That Iesus sholde Iuste ther-fore · in Iugement of armes,
 Who sholde fecche this frut · the seend other Iesus self.
 The maide myldeliche tho · the messenger hue answeredede,
 And saide hendyliche to him · ‘loo, me, hus handmayde, 132
 For to worchen hus wil · with-oute eny synne ;

Ecce ancilla domini, fiat michi secundum verbum tuum,’ etc.

And in the wombe of that wenche · he was fourty wokes,
 And man by-cam of that mayde · to saue mankynde,
 Byg and abydyng · and bold in hus barn-hede, 136
 To hauen fouhten with the feende · ar ful tyme come.
 Ac *Liberum-Arbitrium* · leche-crafte hym tauhte,
 Til *plenitudo temporis* · hih tyme a-prochede,
 That suche a surgeyn setthen · yseye was ther neuere, 140
 Ne non so faithfol fysician ; · for, alle that hym bysouhte,
 He lechede hem of here langoure · lazars and blynde bothe ;

Ceci uident, claudi ambulant, leprosi mundantur :

And comune wymmen conuertede · and clansede hem of synne.

And he lyft vp Lazar · that lay in hus tombe, 144
Quatriduanus cold · quyke dude hym rome.
 Ac er he made that miracle · *mestus cepit esse*,
 And wepte water with hus eyen · the whi witen fewe.
 Ac thoo that seyen that selcouth · seyden that tyme, 148
 That he was god other godes sone · for that grete wonder.
 And somme Iewes seiden · with sorcerie he wrouhte,
 And thorwe the myghte of Mahon · and thorw mysbyleye ;

Demonium habes.

‘Thanne Sathan is 3oure sauour,’ quath Iesus · ‘and hath saued
 3ow ofte ; 152
 Ac ich sauede 3ow sondry tymes · and also ich fedde 3ow

C. 127. ycome ETG ; come P. 128. rype MFGT ; rypy PE. 129.
 in M ; and PF ; & by FG ; & be in T. 133. *fiat—tuum* is in F only.
 141. hym EMFGT ; P *om.* 147. whiten P. 152. saveyour P. sauede P.
 153. and MFTG ; PE *om.*

ȝowre bodyes, ȝowre bestes · and blynde men holpen, 124
 And fedde ȝow with fisshes · and with fyue loues,
 And left baskettes ful of broke mete · bere away who so wolde;—
 And mysseide the Iewes manliche · and manaced hem to bete,
 And knocked on hem with a corde · and caste adown her stalles,
 That in cherche chaffareden · or chaungeden any moneye, 129
 And seyde it in sizte of hem alle · so that alle herden,
 ‘I shal ouertourne this temple · and adown throwe,
 And in thre dayes after · edifye it newe, 132
 And make it as moche other more · in alle manere poyntes,
 As euere it was, and as wyde · wherfore I hote ȝow,
 Of preyeres and of parfitnesse · this place that ȝe callen;

Domus mea domus oracionis vocabitur.

Enuye and yuel wille · was in the Iewes; 136
 Thei casten and contreueden · to kulle hym whan thei miȝte,
 Vche daye after other · their tyme thei awaited.
 Til it bifel on a Fryday · a litel bifore Paske,
 The Thorsday byfore · there he made his maundee, 140
 Sittyng atte sopere · he seide thise wordes—
 ‘I am solde thorw one of ȝow · he shal the tyme rewe
 That euere he his saueoure solde · for syluer or elles.’

Iudas Iangeled there-aȝein · ac Iesus hym tolde, 144
 It was hym-self sothely · and seide, ‘*tu dicis.*’
 Thanne went forth that wikked man · and with the Iewes mette,
 And tolde hem a tokne · how to knowe with Iesus,
 And which tokne to this day · to moche is y-vsede, 148
 That is, kissyng and faire contenaunce · and vnkynde wille;
 And so was with Iudas tho · that Iesus bytrayed.
 ‘*Aue, raby,*’ quod that ribaude · and riȝt to hym he ȝede,
 And kiste hym, to be cauȝt there-by · and kulled of the Iewes.
 Thanne Iesus to Iudas · and to the Iewes seyde, 153
 ‘Falsenesse I fynde · in thi faire speche,
 And gyle in thi gladde chere · and galle is in thi lawghynge.
 Thow shalt be myroure to manye · men to deceyue, 156
 Ac the wors and thi wikkednesse · shal worth vpon thiselue;

Necesse est ut veniant scandala; ve homini illi per quem scandalum venit!

Thow I bi tresoun be ytake · at ȝowre owne wille,

With fisshes and with fyf loues · fyfe thousand at ones,
 And ther-of lefte baskettes · ful of broke mete,
 Broke bred, to beren hit · a-weye hoo so wolde. 156
 Vnkynde and vnknowing! quath Crist · and with a rop smot
 hem,

And ouer-turnede in the temple · here tables and here stalles,
 And drof hem out alle · that ther bowten and solde,

Eiecit ementes et vendentes de templo, etc.

And seide, 'this is an hous · of orisouns and of holynesse, 160
 And whenne that my wil is · ich wol hit ouer-throwe,
 And er thre dayes after · edefye hit newe;'

Intra triduum reedificabo illud.

The Iewes tolden the Iustice · how that Iesus seyde; 163
 Ac the ouerturnyng of the temple · by-tokned the resureccion.
 Enuye and vuel will · ȝorn in the Iewes,
 And porsuede hym pryueliche · and for pans hym bouhte,

Ne forte tumultus fieret in populo,

Of Iudas the Iewe · Iesus owene disciple.

This by-fil on a Fryday · a litel by-fore Paske, 168
 That Iudas and Iewes · Iesus thei mette.

'Aue, rabbi,' quath that ribaud · and right til hym he ȝede,
 And custe Iesus, to be knowe ther-by · and kauht of the Iewes.
 Thanne Iesus to Iudas · and to the Iewes seyde, 172
 'Falsnesse ich fynde · in thy faire speche,
 And kene care in thy cossyngs · and combraunce to thiselue.
 Thow shalt be myrour to menye · men to deceyue;
 Wo to hem that thy wiles vsen · to the worldes ende! 176

Ve homini illi per quem scandalum uenit.

Sitthe ich by treson am take · and to ȝoure wille, Iewes,

C. 159. *Eiecit*, &c. is in F only. 161. wol EG; wolde PT. 162. *Intra*
—illud is in F only. 166. hym T; him MFI; hem PE. 171. kauhte P.
 174. cossyns PE. ȝiselue EFT; ȝyselue IG; ȝe selue P. 176. wordles PG.
 177. wille GT; wil F; wiles I; PE om.

Suffreth my postles in pays · and in pees gange.
 On a Thoresday in thesternes · thus was he taken 160
 Thorw Iudas and Iewes · Iesus was his name;
 That on the Fryday folwyng · for mankynde sake
 Iusted in Ierusalem · a Ioye to vs alle.
 On crosse vpon Caluarye · Cryst toke the bataille, 164
 Azeines deth and the deuel · destroyed her botheres myztes,
 Deyde, and deth fordid · and daye of nyzte made.
 And I awaked there-with · and wyped myne eyghen,
 And after Piers the Plowman · pryed and stared. 168
 Estwarde and westwarde · I awayted after faste,
 And zede forth as an ydiote · in contre to aspye
 After Pieres the Plowman; · many a place I souzte.
 And thanne mette I with a man · a Mydlenten Sondaye, 172
 As hore as an hawethorne · and Abraham he hizte.
 I frayned hym first · fram whennes he come,
 And of whennes he were · and whider that he thouzte.
 ‘I am Feith,’ quod that freke · ‘it falleth nouzte to lye, 176
 And of Abrahames hous · an heraud of armes.
 I seke after a segge · that I seigh ones,
 A ful bolde bacheler · I knewe hym by his blasen.’
 ‘What bereth that buirn?’ quod I tho · ‘so blisse the bityde!’
 ‘Thre leodes in o liȝh · non lenger than other, 181
 Of one mochel and myzte · in mesure and in lengthe;
 That one doth, alle doth · and eche doth by his one.
 The firste hath mizte and maiestee · maker of alle thinges; 184
Pater is his propre name · a persone by hym-selue.
 The secounde of that sire is · sothfastnesse, *Filius*,
 Wardeyne of that witte hath · was euere with-oute gynnyng.
 The thridde hatte the Holygoost · a persone by hym-selue, 188
 The lizte of alle that lyf hath · a londe and a watre,
 Confortoure of creatures · of hym cometh al blisse.
 So thre bilongeth for a lorde · that lordeship claymeth,
 Myzte, and a mene · to knowe his owne myzte, 192
 Of hym and of his seruaunt · and what thei suffre bothe.
 So god that gynnyng hadde neure · but tho hym good thouzte,
 Sent forth his sone · as for seruaunt that tyme,
 To occupien hym here · til issue were spronge, 196
 That is, children of charite · and holicherche the moder.
 Patriarkes and prophetes · and aposteles were the chyldren,

Suffreth myne apostles in pees · and in pees gangen ;'

Sinite hos abire, etc.

Thus Iewes to the Iustices · Iesus thei ladden.—

With muche noyse that nyght · ner frentik ich awakede, 180

In inwit and in alle wittes · after *Liberum-Arbitrium*

Ich waitede wyterly, ac ne wiste · whider he wente,

And thanne mette ich with a man · on Mydlentens Soneday,

As hor as an hawethorn · and Abraam he hihte. 184

'Of whennes art thou?' quath ich · and hendeliche hym grette.

'Ich am with faith,' quath that freek · 'hit falleth nat me to lye,

An heraude of armes · er eny lawe were.'

'What is hus conysaunce,' quath ich · 'in hus cote-armure?' 188

'Thre persones in o pensel,' quath he · 'departable from other ;

O speche and o spirit · spryngeth out of alle,

Of o wit, of on wil · were neuere a-twynne ;

And sondry to seo vpon · *solus deus* he hoteth.' 192

'Siththen thei ben surlepes,' quath ich · 'thei han sondry names.'

'That is soth,' saide he · 'the syre hatte *Pater* ;

And the secunde is a sone · of the syre, *Filius* ;

The thridde is that halt al · a thyng by hym-selue, 196

Holigost is hus name · and he is in alle.'

'This is merk thyng for me,' quath ich · 'and for meny other,

How o lord myghte lyue a thre · ich leyue hit nat,' ich seyde.

'Muse not to muche ther-on,' quath Faith · 'tyl thou more
knowe, 200

Ac looke thou leyue hit leelly · al thy lyf-tyme,

That thre by-longeth to on lorde · that lygaunce cleymeth,

Mighte, and a mene · to seo hus owen mighte, 203

Of hym-self and of hus seruaunt · and what suffreth hem bothe.

God that gynnyng hadde neuere · bote tho hym gode thouhte,

Sente forth hus sone · as for seruaunt that tyme,

To okupien hym here · til issue were spronge, 207

The whiche aren children of charite · and holichurche the moder.

Patriarkes and prophetes · and apostles were the children ;

C. 178. *Sinite—etc.* is in F only. 182. whider MFIT ; weder P. 185.
art MIFT ; ert PEG. 187. And (*for* An) P. 193. surlepees (*for* surle-
pes) PE ; surlep~~us~~ F ; surlep~~is~~ T. 198. meerk P. 203. a MFTG ;
P om. 204. what MIFTG ; PE om.

And Cryst and Crystenedome · and Crystene holycherche.
 In menyngē that man moste · on o god bileue, 200
 And there hym lyked and loued · in thre persones hym shewed.
 And that it may be so and soth · manhode it sheweth,
 Wedloke and widwehode · with virgynyte ynempned,
 In toknyngē of the Trinite · was taken oute of o man. 204
 Adam owre aller fader · Eue was of hym-selue,
 And the issue that thei hadde · it was of hem bothe,
 And either is otheres loye · in thre sondry persones,
 And in heuene and here · one syngulere name; 208
 And thus is mankynde or manhede · of matrimoigne yspronge,
 And bitokneth the Trinite · and trewe bileue.
 Myzte is matrimoigne · that multiplieth the erthe,
 And bitokneth trewly · telle if I dorste, 212
 Hym that firste fourmed al · the fader of heuene.
 The sone, if I it durst seye · resembleth wel the wydwe,
Deus meus, deus meus, ut quid dereliquisti me?
 That is, creatour wex creature · to knowe what was bothe;
 As widwe with-oute wedloke · was neure ȝete yseye, 216
 Na more myzte god be man · but if he moder hadde;
 So wydwe with-oute wedloke · may nouȝte wel stande,
 Ne matrimoigne with-oute moillerye · is nouȝt moche to preyse;
Maledictus homo qui non reliquit semen in Israel, etc.
 Thus in thre persones · is perfitliche manhede, 220
 That is, man and his make · and moillere her children,
 And is nouȝt but gendre of o generacioun · bifor Iesu Cryst in
 heuene,
 So is the Fader forth with the Sone · and fre wille of bothe;
Spiritus procedens a patre et filio;
 Which is the Holygoste of alle · and alle is but o god. 224

And Crist and Cristendome · and Cristene holichurche
By-tokeneth the Trinite · and trewe by-leyue.

O god almyghty · that man made and wrouhte, 212
Semblable to hym-self · er eny synne were,

A thre he is ther he is · and hereof bereth wittnesse
The werkes that hym-self wrouhte · and this worlde bothe;

*Celi enarrant gloriam dei, et opera manuum eius annunciant
firmamentum.*

That he is thre persones departable · ich proue hit by man-
kynde, 216

And o god almyghty · yf alle men beo of Adam.

Eue was of Adam · and out of hym ydrawe,

And Abel of hem bothe · and alle thre o kynde;

Ac these thre that ich carpe of · Adam, and Eue, 220

And Abel, here issue · aren bote on in man-hede.

Matrimonie with-oute moillere · is nat muche to preyse,

The bible bereth wittnesse · a book of the olde lawe,

That a-corsed alle couples · that no kynde forth brouhte;

Maledictus sit homo qui non reliquit semen in israel. 224

And a man with-oute a make · myghte nat wel of kynde

Multeplie, ne more-ouer · with-oute a make louye,

Ne with-oute a sowere be suche seede · this we seen alle.

Now go we to god-hede; · in god, Fader of heuene, 228

Was the Sone in hym-selue · in a *simile*, as Eue

Was, whanne god wolde · out of the wye y-drawe.

And as Abel of Adam · and of hus wif Eue

Sprang forth and spak · a spire of hem tweyne, 232

So out of the Syre and of the Sone · the *Scynt Espirit* of bothe
Ys, and ay was · and worth with-uten ende.

And as thre persones palpable · is pureliche bote o man-kynde.

The whiche is man and hus make · and moillere-is issue, 236

So is god godes sone · in thre persones the Trinite.

In matrimonie aren thre · and of o man cam alle thre,

And to godhede goth thre · and of o god is alle thre;

Loo, treys encountre treys,' quath he · 'in godhede and in man-
hede.' 240

C. 211. trywe P. 220. Ac M; And IFTG; As PE. 221. here EITG;
heer P; her F. 225. welle P. 228. go we TG; gowe I; goo wee P.
230. wye EG; wi3 T; wy F; weye P. 232. spire EFT; spir P. tweyne P.
234. was T; weren PEMFG.

Thus in a somer I hym seigh · as I satte in my porche ;

I ros vp and reuerenced hym · and rȳt faire hym grette ;
 Thre men to my syȳte · I made wel at ese,
 Wesche her feet and wyped hem · and afterward thei eten 228
 Calues flesshe and cakebrede · and knewe what I thouȳte ;
 Ful trewe tokenes bitwene vs is · to telle whan me lyketh.
 Firste he foned me · if I loued bettere
 Hym, or Ysaak myn ayre · the which he hiȳte me kulle. 232
 He wiste my wille by hym · he wil me it allowe,
 I am ful syker in soule ther-of · and my sone bothe.
 I circumcised my sone sitthen for his sake ;
 My-self and my meyne · and alle that male were 236
 Bledden blode for that lordes loue · and hope to blisse the tyme.
 Myn affiaunce and my faith · is ferme in this bilieue ;
 For hym-self bihiȳte to me · and to myne issue bothe
 Londe and lordship · and lyf with-uten ende ; 240
 To me and to myn issue · more ȳete he me graunted,
 Mercy for owre mysdedes · as many tyme as we asken ;

Quam olim Abrahe promisisti, et semini eius.

And sith he sent me to seye · I shoulde do sacrifice,
 And done hym worshiȳe with bred · and with wyn bothe, 244
 And called me the fote of his faith · his folke forto saue,
 And defende hem fro the fende · folke that on me leueden.
 Thus haue I ben his herauȳe · here and in helle,
 And confortȳd many a careful · that after his comynge wayten.
 And thus I seke hym, he seide · ‘for I herde seyȳe late 249
 Of a barne that baptised hym · Iohan Baptiste was his name,
 That to patriarkes and to prophetes · and to other peple in
 derknesse

Seyde that he seigh here · that sholde saue vs alle ; 252

Ecce agnus dei, etc.’

I hadde wonder of his wordes · and of his wyȳe clothes ;
 For in his bosome he bar a thyȳg · that he blissȳd euere.
 And I loked on his lappe · a lazar lay there-inne

'Hauest thou seyen this?' ich seide · 'alle thre, and o god?'
 'In a somer ich seyh hym,' quath he · 'as ich sat in my porche,
 Where god cam goynge a-thre · ryght by my gate;

Tres uidit et unum adorauit.

Ich ros vp and reuerencede god · and ryght fayre hym grette,
 Wesh here feet, and wypede hem · and after thei eten, 244
 And what ich thouhte and my wyf · he ous wel tolde.
 He by-hihte ous issue and heir · and in oure olde age,
 Ful trewe tokne by-twyne ous is · what tyme that ich mette hym;
 How he fondede me ferst · my faire sone Ysaac, 249
 To make sacrifice of hym · he het me, hym to honoure.
 Ich with-sat nat hus heste · ich hope and by-leyue
 Wher ich walke in this worlde · he wol hit me a-lowe. 252
 Ich circumsysede my sone · and al-so, for hus sake,
 My-self and my meyne · and alle that maule were
 Bleden blod for that lordes loue · ich hope to blesse the tyme.
 Myn affiaunce and my feith · is ferm in hus by-leyue; 256
 For hym-self seide · ich sholde haue · and myn issue bothe
 Lond and lordshup ynow · and lyf with-uten ende.
 To me and to myn issue · more he by-hihte,
 Mercy for oure mysdedes · as meny tymes 260
 As we wilnede and wolde · with mouth and herte asken.
 And sitthen he sende me to sayn · and seide that ich sholde
 Worshupen hym with wyn · and with bred bothe
 At ones on an auter · in worshup of the Trinite, 264
 And make sacrifice so · som-what hit by-tokneth;
 Ich leyue that thilke lorde thenke · a newe lawe to make;

Fiel unum ouile et unus pastor.

Thus haue ich beo hus heraude · her and in helle, 267
 And comforted menye carful there · that after hus comyng loken.
 For-thi ich seke him,' he seide · 'for seynt Iohan the baptist
 Seide that he seih hym her · that sholde saue ous alle;

Ecce agnus dei qui tollit peccata mundi.'

Thenne hadde ich wonder of hus wordes · and of hus wide
 clothes,
 For in hus bosom he bar a thyng · and that he blessedde ofte. 272
 And ich loked in hus lappe · a lazar lay ther-ynne,

C. 248. mette EFG; mete PT. 252. wordle P. 256. in IFT; PE om.
 270. saue IFTG; ioye PE. *qui—mundi* is in F only.

Amonges patriarkes and profetes · pleyande togyderes. 256
 'What awaytestow?' quod he · 'and what woldestow haue?'
 'I wolde wyte,' quod I tho · 'what is in ȝowre lappe?'
 'Loo!' quod he, and lete me se · 'lorde, mercy!' I seide,
 'This is a present of moche prys · what prynce shal it haue?'
 'It is a precieuse present,' quod he · 'ac the pouke it hath
 attached, 261
 And me there-myde,' quod that man · 'may no wedde vs quite,
 Ne no buyrn be owre borwgh · ne bryng vs fram his daungere;
 Oute of the poukes pondfolde · no meynprise may vs fecche,
 Tyl he come that I carpe of · Cryst is his name, 265
 That shal delyure vs some daye · out of the deueles powere,
 And bettere wedde for vs legge · than we ben alle worthy,
 That is, lyf for lyf · or ligge thus euere 268
 Lollynge in my lappe · tyl such a lorde vs fecche.'
 'Allas!' I seyde, 'that synne · so longe shal lette
 The myȝte of goddes mercy · that myȝt vs alle amende!'
 I wepte for his wordes · with that sawe I an other 272
 Rapelich renne forth; · the riȝte waye he went.
 I affrayned hym fyrste · fram whennes he come,
 And what he hiȝte and whider he wolde · and wightlich he tolde.

With patriarkes and prophetes · pleiynge to-gederes.
 'What waytest thou,' quath Faith · 'and what woldest thou haue?'
 'Ich wolde wyte,' quath ich tho · 'what is in thy lappe?' 276
 'Loo!' quath he, and leet me seo · 'lord, mercy!' ich seide,
 'This is a present of muche prys · what pryns shal hit haue?'
 'Hit is a precieuse present,' quath he · 'ac the pouke hit hath
 attached,
 And me ther-with,' quath the wye · 'may no wed ous quite, 280
 Ne no bern beo oure borghe · ne brynge ous out of daunger,
 Fro the poukes poundfalde · no maynprise may ous fecche,
 Til he come that ich carpe of · Crist is hus name,
 That shal delyuery ous som day · out of the deueles powere, 284
 And betere wed for ous wagen · than alle we beon worthi,
 And that is, lif for lyf · other ligge thus euere,
 Lollynge in my lappe thus · til such a lord ous fecche.'
 'Alas!' ich seide, 'that synne · so longe shal lette 288
 The myght of godes mercy · that myghte ous alle amende!'
 And wepte for hus wordes; · with that ich seyh an other
 Rappliche renne · the righte wey we wente;
 And ich fraynede hym furst · fro whennes he come, 292
 What he hihte, and whider he wolde · and wyghtliche he ous
 tolde.

Hic explicit passus secundus de Dobet.

C. 275. faiht P. 279. attachede P. 287. Lollynge IT; Longynge
 PEFG. 293. whider IT; whedur F, whodere E; woder P.

PASSUS XVII.

Passus xvij^m, et secundus de Do-bel.

‘**I** AM *Spes*,’ quod he, ‘a spye · and spire after a kny3te,
That toke me a maundement · vpon the mounthe of Synay,
To reule alle rewmes with; · I bere the writte here.’

‘Is it asseled?’ I seyde · ‘may men se thi lettres?’ 4
‘Nay,’ he sayde, ‘I seke hym · that hath the sele to kepe;
And that is, crosse and Crystenedome · and Cryst there-on to hange.

And whan it is asseled so · I wote wel the sothe,
That Lucyferes lordeship · laste shal no lenger.’ 8

‘Late se thi lettres,’ quod I · ‘we mi3te the lawe knowe.’
Thanne plokke he forth a patent · a pece of an harde roche,
Wher-on were writen two wordes · on this wyse y-glosed,

Dilige deum et proximum tuum, etc.

This was the tixte trewly · I toke ful gode 3eme; 12
The glose was gloriously writen · with a gilte penne,

In hijs duobus mandatis tota lex pendet et prophetia.

‘Ben here alle thi lordes lawes?’ quod I · ‘3e, leue me wel,’
he seyde,

‘And who so worcheth after this writte · I wil vndertaken,
Shal neuere deuel hym dere · ne deth in soule greue. 16

For though I seye it my-self · I haue saued with this charme
Of men and of wommen · many score thousandes.’

‘He seith soth,’ seyde this heraud · ‘I haue yfoundede it ofte;
Lo here in my lappe · that leued on that charme, 20

Iosue and Iudith · and Iudas Macabeus,
3e, and sixty thousande bisyde forth · that ben nou3t seyen
here.’

B. 11. were WCBY; weren O; was LR. 14. Ben WCBY; Been O;
Is LR.

PASSUS XX.

Hic incipit passus tercius de Dobet.

‘**I**CH am *Spes*, a spye,’ quath he · ‘and spire after a knyght,
 That tooke me a maundement · vp-on the mounte of Synay,
 To ruele alle reames ther-with · in right and in reison.
 Loo, here the lettere,’ quath he · ‘in Latyn and in Ebrew, 4
 That ich seye is sothe · seo ho so lyketh.’

‘Ys hit a-seled?’ ich seyde · ‘may men seo the letteres?’
 ‘Nay,’ he seyde; ‘ich seke hym · that hath the seel to kepe,
 The whiche is Criste and Cristendome · and a croys ther-on to
 honge. 8

Were hit ther-with a-seeled · ich wote wel the sothe,
 That Lucifers lordshup · ligge sholde ful lowe.’
 ‘Leet se thi letteres,’ quath ich · ‘we myghte the lawe knowe.’
 He plyghte forth a patente · a pece of an harde roche, 12
 Wher-on was write two wordes · in this wise glosede;

Dilige deum et proximum tuum.

This was the tyxt treweliche · ich toke ful good gome;
 The glose gloriousliche was wryte · wyth a gylt penne;
In his duobus mandatis pendet tota lex et prophete.

‘Ys her al thy lordes lettere?’ quath ich · ‘3e, leue me,’ he
 sayde, 16

‘And ho so worcheth after this write · ich wol vnder-take,
 Shal neuere deouel hym dere · ne deth in soule greue.
 For thauh ich seye hit my-self · ich haue saued with this charme
 Of men and of wymmen · meny score thousand.’ 20

‘He seith soth,’ seide Faith · ‘ich haue founde hit trewe.
 Loo, her in my lappe,’ quath Faith · ‘that leyuede vp-on the
 lettere,

Bothe Iosue and Iudith · and Iudas Makabeus,
 And sixe thousand mo,’ quath Faith · ‘ich can nat seye here
 names.’ 24

C. 1. a spye IG; a spie FT; PE *om.* spire T; spere I; spirr P. 3. in
 (2) EIFT; PG *om.* 6. a-selede P. 13. two ET; to PFG. *tuum* T;
 PEIG *om.* 14. triweliche P. 15. & *prophete* EF; PITG *om.* 16.
 leue me he EIT; leyf he me P. 24. seye F; seize T; seyn I; telle PE.

‘ȝowre wordes aren wonderful,’ quod I tho · ‘which of ȝow
is trewest,

And lelest to leue on · for lyf and for soule? 24

Abraham seith that he seigh · holy the Trinite,

Thre persones in parcelles · departable fro other,

And alle thre but o god · thus Abraham me tauȝte,

And hath sauēd that bileued so · and sory for her synnes, 28

He can nouȝte segge the somme · and some aren in his lappe.

What neded it thanne · a newe lawe to bigynne,

Sith the fyrst sufficeth · to sauacioun and to blisse? 31

And now cometh *Spes*, and speketh · that hath aspied the lawe,

And telleth nouȝte of the Trinitee · that toke hym his lettres,

‘To byleue and louye · in o lorde almyȝty,

And sitthe riȝt as my-self · so louye alle peple.’

The gome that goth with o staf · he semeth in gretter bele 36

Than he that goth with two staues · to syȝte of vs alle.

And riȝte so, by the rode! · resoun me sheweth,

It is lyȝter to lewed men · a lessoun to knowe,

Than for to techen hem two · and to harde to lerne the leest!

It is ful harde for any man · on Abraham byleue, 41

And welawey worse ȝit · for to loue a shrewe!

It is liȝter to leue · in thre louely persones

Than for to louye and leue · as wel lorelles as lele. 44

Go thi gate,’ quod I to *Spes* · ‘so me god helpe!

Tho that lerneth thi lawe · wil litel while vsen it!’

And as we wenten thus in the weye · wordyng toȝyderes,

Thanne seye we a Samaritan · sittende on a mule, 48

Rydyng ful rapely · the riȝt weye we ȝeden,

Comyng fro a cuntre · that men called Ierico;

To a Iustes in Iherusalem · he chaced away faste.

Bothe the heraud and Hope · and he mette at ones 52

Where a man was wounded · and with theues taken.

He myȝte neither steppe ne stonde · ne stere fote ne handes,

Ne helpe hym-self sothely · for semiuyf he semed,

And as naked as a nedle · and none helpe aboute hym. 56

Feith had first siȝte of hym · ac he flegh on syde,

And nolde nouȝt neighen hym · by nyne londes lengthe.

Hope cam hippyng after · that hadde so ybosted,

'ȝoure wordes aren wonderful,' quath ich · 'wher eny of ȝow be trewe

And leel to be-leyuen on · for body other for soule?

Abraam seith that he seih · holiche the Trinite,

Thre persones parcel-mele · departable from other, 28

And alle thre bote o god; · thus Abraam bereth wittnesse,

And ysauede that by-leyueth so · and soty for here synnes,

He can no certayn summe telle · and somme aren in hus lappe.

What neodeth hit thanne · a newe lawe to brynge, 32

Sutthe the furste suffisede · so by-leyue and be ysaued?

And now cometh her this *Spes* · and hath aspied the lawe,

That of the Trinite ne telleth · ne taketh mo persones

To god-hede, bote o god · and o god almyghty, 36

The whiche alle men aren holde · ouere alle thyng to honoure;

And sitthe to loue and to leue · for that lordes sake

Alle manere of men · as muche as ous self.

And for to louye and to leyue · in o lord almyghty. 40

Hit is lyght for lewede · and for lerede bothe;

Ac for to by-leyue in o lorde · that lyueth in thre persones,

And lereth that we louye sholde · as wel lyeres as leele—

Go thy gat,' quath ich to *Spes* · 'so me god helpe, 44

Tho that leorneth thi lawe · wolde litel while hit vsen!'

And as we wente in the way · thus wordyng of this matere,

Then seih we a Samaritan · cam syttyng on a mule,

Rydyng ful raply · the ryght way that we wente, 48

Comyng fram a contreie · that men callide Ierico,

To Iusten in Ierusalem · he lacede away ful faste.

Bothe Abraam and *Spes* · and he metten to-gederes

In a wilde wilderness · wher theoues hadden bounde 52

A man, as me tho thouhte · to muche care thei brouhte.

For he ne myghte steppe ne stande · ne stere fot ne hondes,

Ne helpe hym-selue sothliche · for *seminius* he semede,

And naked as a neelde · and non help aboute hym. 56

Faith on hym hadde furst a sight · ac he fleih a-syde,

And wolde nat neyhle hym · by nyne londes lengthe.

Hope cam hippyng after · that hadde so ybosted

C. 25. trywe P. 26. And al P; *but* EIFT *om.* al. 32. hit G; it IFT; PE *om.* 33. ysauede P. 39. muche MFT; meche P. 44. to EMIFTG; þo P. 46. wordyng of IMFTG; wondryng in P. 51. and MIFTG; adde (*sic*) P.

How he with Moyses maundement · hadde many men y-holpe;
 Ac whan he hadde sizte of that segge · a-syde he gan hym drawe,
 Dredfully, by this day! as duk · doth fram the faucoun.

Ac so sone so the Samaritan · hadde sizte of this lede,
 He lizte adown of lyard · and ladde hym in his hande, 64
 And to the wye he went · his woundes to biholde,
 And parceyued bi his pous · he was in peril to deye,
 And but-if he hadde recourere the rather · that rise shulde he
 neure;

And breyde to his boteles · and bothe he atamede; 68
 Wyth wyn and with oyle · his woundes he wasshed,
 Enbawmed hym and bonde his hed · and in his lappe hym layde,
 And ladde hym so forth on lyard · to *lex-christi*, a graunge,
 Wel six myle or seuene · biside the newe market; 72
 Herberwed hym at an hostrye · and to the hostellere called,
 And sayde, 'haue, kepe this man · til I come fro the Iustes,
 And lo here syluer,' he seyde · 'for salue to his woundes.'
 And he toke hym two pans · to lyfode as it were, 76
 And seide, 'what he speneth more · I make the good here-after;
 For I may nouȝt lette,' quod that leode · and lyarde he
 bistrydeth,

And raped hym to-Iherusalem-ward · the rizte waye to ryde.

Faith folweth after faste · and fonded to mete hym, 80
 And *Spes* spaklich hym spedde · spede if he myȝte,
 To ouertake hym and talke to hym · ar thei to toun come.
 And whan I seyȝ this, I soiourned nouȝte · but shope me to
 renne,

And suwed that Samaritan · that was so ful of pite, 84
 And graunted hym to ben his grome · 'gramercy,' he seyde,
 'Ac thi frende and thi felawe,' quod he · 'thow fyndest me
 at nede.'

And I thanked hym tho · and sith I hym tolde,
 How that Feith fleigh away · and *Spes* his felaw bothe, 88
 For sizte of the sorweful man · that robbed was with theues.
 'Haue hem excused,' quod he · 'her help may litel auaille;
 May no medcyn on molde · the man to hele brynge,
 Neither Feith ne fyn Hope · so festred ben his woundis, 92
 With-out the blode of a barn · borne of a mayde.

Hou he with Moyses maundement · hade meny men holpen; 60
 And whanne he hadde siht of this sike · asyde he gan drawe,
 And dredfulliche with-drow hym · and dorste go no nerre.

Ac as sone so the Samaritan · hadde sighte of that syke,
 He alyghte a-non of lyarde · and ladde hym in hus hondes, 64
 And to this wye he wente · hus wondes to beholde.
 He perceyuede by his pous · he was in peril to deye,
 And bote he hadde recouer the rather · that rise sholde he neuere.

He vnbokelede hus boteles · and bothe he a-tamede; 68
 With wyn and with oile · hus wondes he can lithe;
 Enbaumed hym and bond hus heuede · and on bayarde hym
 sette,

And ledde hym forth to *lauacrum* · *lex-dei*, a graunge,
 Is sixe myle other seuene · by-syde the newe markett, 72
 And lefte hym there a lechinge · to lyuen if he myghte;
 And took two pans to the hosteler · to take kepe to hym,
 'And that goth mor for hus medicine · ich make the good
 azenwarde, 75
 For ich may nat lette,' quath that lede · and lyarde he bystrydeth,

And rapede hym to ryde · the righte wey to Ierusalem.
 Bothe Faith and hus felawe *Sþes* · folweden faste after;

Ac ich suwede the Samaritan · and seide hou thei bothe
 Weren afered, and flowen · fro the man y-wonded. 80
 'Haue hem excused,' quath the Samaritan · 'here help wolde
 nat vaille,
 Ne medecine vnder molde · the man to hele brynge,
 Nother Faith ne fyn Hope · so festered aren hus wondes;
 With-oute the blod of a barn · he beoth nouht ysaued, 84
 The whiche barn mot neodes · be bore of a mayde,

C. 62. an (*for* and) P. 65. wye E; wy F; wi; T; weye P. holde (*for*
 beholde) P. 76. ich E; i MIFT; P *om.* þat EIMFT; þe P. 80.
 y-wondede P. 84. a EIMFTG; þat P.

And be he bathed in that blode · baptised, as it were,
 And thanne plastred with penaunce · and passioun of that babi,
 He shulde stonde and steppe; · ac stalworth worth he neure,
 Tyl he haue eten al the barn · and his blode ydronke. 97
 For went neuere wy in this worlde · thorw that wildernessse,
 That he ne was robbed or rifled · rode he there or ȝede,
 Saue Faith, and his felaw · *Spes*, and my-selue, 100
 And thi-self now, and such · as suwen owre werkis.
 For outlawes in the wode · and vnder banke lotyeth,
 And may vch man se · and gode merke take,
 Who is bihynde and who bifore · and who ben on hors, 104
 For he halt hym hardyer on horse · than he that is a fote.
 For he seigh me, that am Samaritan · suwen Feith and his felaw
 On my caple that hatte *Caro* · (of mankynde I toke it),
 He was vnhardy, that harlot · and hudde hym *in inferno*. 108
 Ac ar this day thre dayes · I dar vndertaken,
 That he worth fettred, that feloun · fast with cheynes,
 And neure eft greue grome · that goth this ilke gate;

O mors, ero mors tua, etc.,

And thanne shal Feith be forester here · and in this frith walke,
 And kennen out comune men · that knoweth nouȝte the contre,
 Which is the weye that ich went · and wherforth to Iherusalem.
 And Hope the hostelleres man shal be · there the man lith an
 helynge;

And alle that fieble and faynt be · that Faith may nouȝt teche,
 Hope shal lede hem forth with loue · as his lettre telleth, 117
 And hostel hem and hele · thorw holicherche bileue,
 Tyl I haue salue for alle syke · and thanne shal I retourne,
 And come aȝein bi this contree · and confort alle syke 120
 That craueth it or coueiteth it · and cryeth there-after.
 For the barne was born in Bethleem · that with his blode shal
 saue

Alle that lyueth in faith, and folweth · his felawes techynge.'

'A! swete syre!' I seyde tho · 'wher shal I byleue, 124
 As Feith and his felawe · enfourmed me bcthe?
 In thre persones departable · that perpetuel were euere,
 And alle thre but o god · thus Abraham me tauȝte;—
 And Hope afterwarde · he bad me to louye 128

And with the blod of that barn · embaumed and baptized.
 And thauh he steppe and stande · right strong worth he neuere
 Til he haue eten al that barn · and hus blod dronken, 88
 And 3ut be plastred with pacience · when fondynges hym prykieth—
 For wente neuere man this way · that he ne was here rifled,
 Saue my-selue sothliche · and suche as ich louede—
 And 3ut be-leyue leelly · vpon that litel baby, 91
 That his likame schal lechen · atte laste ous alle.'

'A! syre,' ich seide · 'shul nat we by-leyue,
 As Faith and hus felawe *Spes* · enformede me bothe,
 In thre persones, a parceles · departable from other, 96
 And all thre bote o god? · thus Abraham me tauhte.
 And Hope afterwarde · of god more me tolde,

C. 86. embaumed P. baptized P. 88. heten (*for* eten) P. 89.
 plastrede P. 90. man MIT; men PEF. rifled P. 92. P *ins.* to
before beleyue. 93. schal EMIFG; P *om.* 94. weye (*for* we) P.

O god wyth al my good · and alle gomes after,
 Louye hem lyke my-selue · ac owre lorde aboue alle.
 ‘After Abraham,’ quod he · ‘that heraud of armes,
 Sette faste thi faith · and ferme bileue. 132
 And, as Hope hizte the · I hote that thou louye
 Thyn euene-crystene euermore · euene-forth with thiself.
 And if conscience carpe there-azein · or kynde witte oither,
 Or heretykes with argumentz · thin honde thou hem shewe;
 For god is after an hande · yhere now and knowe it.

The fader was fyrst, as a fyst · with o fynger foldynge, 138
 Tyl hym loued and lest · to vnlosen his fynger,
 And profre it forth as with a paume · to what place it sholde.
 The paume is purely the hande · and profreth forth the fynGRES
 To mynystre and to make · that myzte of hande knoweth,
 And bitokneth trewly · telle who so liketh,
 The holygost of heuene; · he is as the paume. 144
 The fynGRES that fre ben · to folde and to serue,
 Bitokneth sothly the sone · that sent was til erthe,
 That toched and tasted · atte techynge of the paume
 Seynt Marie a mayde · and mankynde lauhte; 148

Qui conceptus est de spiritu sancto, natus, etc.

The fader is thanne as a fust · with fynger to touche,

Quia omnia traham ad me ipsum, etc.,

Al that the paume parceyueth · profitable to fele.
 Thus ar thei alle but one · as it an hande were,
 And thre sondry siztes · in one shewynge. 152
 The paume, for he putteth forth fynGRES · and the fust bothe,
 Rizt so redily · reson it sheweth,
 How he that is holygoste · sire and sone preueth.
 And as the hande halt harde · and al thyng faste 156
 Thorw foure fynGRES and a thombe · forth with the paume,
 Rizte so the fader and the sone · and seynt spirit the thridde
 Halt al the wyde worlde · with-in hem thre,
 Bothe welkne and the wynde · water and erthe, 160
 Heuene and helle · and al that there is inne.
 Thus it is, nedeth no man · to trowe non other,
 That thre thinges bilongeth · in owre lorde of heuene,
 And aren serelepes by hem-self · asondry were neure, 164

B. 136. hem WR; hym LCR. 148. *natus* CBY; LWR *om.* 164.
 serelepes Y; serelopes W; *miswritten* serclepes L.

And lerede me for hus loue · to louye al man-kynde,
 And hym abouen alle · and hem as my-selue; 100
 Nother lacky ne alose · ne leyue that ther were
 Eny wickeder in this worlde · than y were myself,
 And most imparfit of alle persones · and pacientliche suffre
 Alle manere of men · and thauh ich myghte me venge, 104
 I sholde tholie and thonken hem · that me vuel wolde.
 'He seide soth,' quath the Samaritan · 'and so ich rede the also.
 And as Abraam the olde · of o god the taughte,
 Loke thow louye and by-leyue · al thy lyf-tyme. 108
 And if kynde witt carpe her-aȝen · and other kynne thouhtes,
 Other heretikes with argumens · thyn hond thou hem shewe!
 For god that al by-gan · in gynnyng of the worlde,
 Ferde furst as a fust · and ȝut is, as ich leyue, 112

Mundum pugillo continens,

As with a fust with o fynger · yfolde to-gederes,
 Til hym liked and luste · to vnlose the fynger,
 And profrede hit forth as with the paume · to what place it
 sholde.

The paume is the pith of the honde · and profreth forth the
 fyngres, 116

To mynystre and to make · that myght of hond knoweth,
 And bytokneth trewely · telle ho so liketh,
 The holy gost of heuene; · he is as the paume.
 The fyngres that freo beo · to folden and to clycchen 120
 By-tokneth sothliche the sone · that sente was tyl erthe,
 Touchede and tastede · at techyng of the paume,
 Seynte Marie, a mayde · and mankynde lauhte;

Natus ex Maria uirgine.

The fader is thenne as the fust · with fynger and with paume,
 To huden and to holde · as holy writ telleth; 125

Omnia traham ad me ipsum.

Al that the fynger gropeth · graythly he grypeth,
 Bote yf that that he gropeth · greue the paume.
 Thus are thei alle bote on · as hit an hande were, 128
 A fust with a fynger · and a foll paume.

C. 102. wordle P. 107. tauhgte P. 117. mynestre P. 118. by-
 tocknep P. 120. folden E; folde MIFTG; felden P. 121. sotthliche P.
 125. wriȝth (for writ) P.

Namore than myn hande may · meue with-outen fyngres.
 And as my fust is ful honde · yfolde togideres,
 So is the fader a ful god · formeour and shepper,

Tu fabricator omnium, etc.,

And al the myzte myd hym is · in makyng of thynges. 168

The fyngres fourmen a ful hande · to purtreie or peynten
 Keruyng and compassyng · as crafte of the fyngres;
 Riȝt so is the sone · the science of the fader,
 And ful god, as is the fader · no febler ne no better. 172

The paume is purelich the hande · hath power bi hymselfe,
 Otherwyse than the wrythen fuste · or werkmanschip of fyngres;
 For the paume hath powere · to put oute alle the ioyntes,
 And to vnfolde the folden fuste · for hym it bilongeth; 176
 And receyue that the fyngres recheth · and refuse bothe,
 Whan he feleth the fust · and the fyngres wille.

So is the holygoste god · nother gretter ne lasse
 Than is the sire and the sone · and in the same myzte, 180
 And alle ar thei but o god · as is myn hande and my fyngres,
 Vnfolden or folden · my fuste and myn paume,
 Al is but an hande · how so I torne it.

Ac who is herte in the hande · euene in the myddes, 184
 He may receyue riȝt nouȝte · resoun it sheweth;
 For the fyngres, that folde shulde · and the fuste make,
 For peyne of the paume · powere hem failleth
 To clucche or to clawe · to clyppe or to holde. 188

Were the myddel of myn honde · ymaymed or ypersshed,
 I shulde receyue riȝte nouȝte · of that I reche myzte.
 Ac though my thombe and my fyngres · bothe were to-shullen,
 And the myddel of myn hande · with-oute male ese, 192
 In many kynnes maneres · I myzte my-self helpe,
 Bothe meue and amende · though alle my fyngres oke.
 Bi this skil, me thynketh · I se an euydence,
 That who so synneth in the seynt spirit · assoilled worth he neure,
 Noither here ne elles-where · as I herde telle, 197

Qui peccat in spiritum sanctum, nunquam, etc.,

For he prikketh god as in the paume · that *peccat in spiritum
 sanctum.*

B. 176—178. for hym—fust and is in R only. 188. clucche WY; cluche R;
 clicche L. 195. þynketh WCYB; þynke L; see l. 278. 197, 198. *spiritu
 sancto* LWCYB; *spiritum sanctum* C. *nunquam* is in R only.

And as the fust is ful hand · yfolde to-gederes,
 So is the fader a ful god · the furste of hem alle.
 And as my fust is furst · er ich my fyngers shewe, 132
 So is he fader and former · the furste of alle thynges;

Tu fabricator omnium;

And alle the myghte with hym is · was, and worth euere.

The fyngres is ful hand · for, failled thei here thombe,
 Portrey ne peynte · parfitliche, ich leyue, 136
 Sholde no wryzt worche · were he aweye.
 Ryzt so, faillede the sone · the syre be ne myghte,
 Ne holde, ne helpe · ne hente that he louede;

Dextre dei tu digitus.

The paume is pureliche the honde · and hath power by hym-self,
 Other-wise than the wrythen fust · other werkmanshup of fyngres.
 For the paume hath power · to putten oute the loyntes,
 And to vnfolde the fust · for hym hit bylongeth, 143
 And receyuen that the fyngres rechen · and refuse, yf hym liketh,
 Al that the fyngres and the fust · felen and touchen,
 Beo he greued with here gripe · the holy gost let falle.
 Thus is the holigost god · nother grettoure ne lasse 147
 Thenne is the syre other the sone · and of the same myghte,
 And alle thre nys bote o god · as my hand and my fyngres,
 Vnfolde other yfolde · a fust-wyse other elles,
 Al is hit bote on hand · hou so y turne hit.

Ac ho so is hurt in the hand · euene in the myddes, 152
 He may receyue ryght nouht · reson hit sheweth;
 For the fyngeres that folde sholden · and the fust make,
 For peyne of the paume · power hem failleth
 To clucche other to clawe · to cluppe other to holde. 156
 Were the myddel of myn hand · with-oute mal ese,
 In menye kynne manere · ich myghte my-self helpe,
 Bothe meue and amende · thauh alle my fyngres oken.
 By this *simile*, he seide · ‘ich seo an euidence, 160
 That ho so synegeth in the *seynt esprit* · asoilled worth he neuere,
 Nother her ne elles-wher · as ich herde telle;

Qui peccat in spiritum sanctum neque remittetur ei, etc.

He priketh god as in the paume · that *peccat in spiritum sanctum*.

C. 130. yfoolde P. 133. an (*for* and) P. 137. wry3th P. 138.
 Ry3ght P. 146. greneued P. 155. hem MIFG; hym PET. 161. as-
 soillede P. 162. *neque—ei* is in F only.

For god the fader is as a fuste · the sone is as a fynger, 199
 The holy goste of heuene · is, as it were, the pawme.
 So who so synneth in seynt spirit · it semeth that he greueth
 God, that he grypeth with · and wolde his grace quenche.
 And to a torche or a tapre · the Trinitee is lykned ;
 As wex and a weke · were twyned togideres, 204
 And thanne a fyre flaumende · forth oute of bothe ;
 And as wex and weyke · and hote fyre togyderes
 Fostren forth a flaumbe · and a feyre leye,
 So doth the sire and the sone · and also *spiritus sanctus* 208
 Fostren forth amonges folke · loue and bileue,
 That alkyn Crystene · clenseth of synnes.
 And as thow seest some tyme · sodeynliche a torche,
 The blase there-of yblowe out · ȝet brenneth the weyke, 212
 With-oute leye or lizte · that the macche brenneth,
 So is the holygost god · and grace with-oute mercy
 To alle vnkynde creatures · that coueite to destruye
 Lele loue other lyf · that owre lorde shapte. 216
 And as glowande gledes · gladieth nouȝte this werkmen,
 That worchen and waken · in wyntres niztes,
 As doth a kex or a candel · that cauȝte hath fyre and blaseth,
 Namore doth sire ne sone · ne seynt spirit togyderes, 220
 Graunteth no grace · ne forȝifnesse of synnes,
 Til the holi goste gynne · to glowe and to blase.
 So that the holygoste · gloweth but as a glede,
 Tyl that lele loue · ligge on hym and blowe, 224
 And thanne flaumbeth he as fyre · on fader and on *filius*,
 And melteth her myȝte in-to mercy · as men may se in wyntre
 Ysekeles in euses · thorw hete of the sonne,
 Melteth in a mynut-while · to myst and to watre ; 228
 So grace of the holygoste · the grete myȝte of the Trinite
 Melteth in-to mercy · to mercyable, and to non other.
 And as wex with-uten more · on a warme glede
 Wil brennen and blasen · be thei to-gyderes, 232
 And solacen hem that may se · that sitten in derkenesse,

O. 167. queynche P. 168. likenede P. 169. were twyned I; were
 tweyned M; were twynnyd T; and warme fur (*by confusion with* l. 171) PEG.
 171. and warm fuyr MG; and warme fure I; were twynede P (*see* l. 169).

For the fader is as the fust · the sone is as the fynGRES, 164
 The holy gost of heuene · he is as the paume.
 So ho so synegeth azens the *seynte esprit* · hit semeth that he
 greueth

God, ther he gripeth · and wolde hus grace quenche.

For to a torche other to a taper · the Trinite is likened, 168
 As wexe and a weke · were twyned to-gederes,
 And fuyr flaumed · forth of hem bothe ;

And as wex and weke · and warm fuyr to-gederes
 Fostren forth a flaume · and a fayre lye, 172

That serueth these swynkeres · to seo by a nyghtes,
 So doth the syre and the sone · and *seynt esprit* to-gederes,
 Fostren forth a-mong folke · fyn loue and by-leyue,
 That alle kynne Crystene · clanseth of synne. 176

And as thou suxt some tyme · sodenliche, of a torche
 The blase beo blowen out · 3ut brenneth the weke,
 With-uten lye and lyght · lith fuyr in the macche,
 So is the holy gost god · and grace with-oute mercy 180
 To alle vnkynde creatures · that coueyten to distruye
 Leel lycame, and lif · that oure lorde shupte.

And as glowynge gledes · gladeth nat these workemen
 That worchen and waken · in wynteres nyghtes, 184

As doth a kyx other a candele · that cauht hath fuyr, and blaseth,
 No more doth the syre ne the sone · ne *seynte esprit* to-gederes
 Graunten eny grace · ne for-gyuenesse of synnes,
 Til the holy gost by-gynne · to glowen and blase. 188

So that the holy gost · gloweth bote as a glede,
 Til that loue and by-leyue · leelliche to hym blowe.

Thenne flammeth he as fuyr · on fader and on *filius*,
 And melteth myghte in-to mercy · as we may seo a wynter,
 Isykles in euesynges · thorgh hete of the sonne 193

Melteth in a mynt-while · to myst and to water ;
 So grace of the holy gost · melteth al to mercy,
 The grete myghte of the Trinite · to mercyable, and to none othere.
 And as wex with-oute more · vpon a warm glede 197

Wol brennen and blasen · beo thei to-gyderes,
 And solasen hem that mowe nat seon · syttyng in deorknesse,

179. lith IFMTG ; lyght P.
 (for we) P.

183. glades P (see l. 189).

192. wey

So wole the fader forȝif · folke of mylde hertes
 That reufulliche repenten · and restitucioun make,
 In as moche as thei mowen · amenden and payen. 236
 And if it suffice nouȝte for assetz · that in suche a wille deyeth,
 Mercy for his mekenesse · wil make good the remenaunte.
 And as the weyke and fyre · wil make a warme flaumbe
 For to myrthe men with · that in merke sitten, 240
 So wil Cryst of his curteisye · and men crye hym mercy,
 Bothe forȝiue and forȝete · and ȝet bidde for vs
 To the fader of heuene · forȝyuenesse to haue.

Ac hew fyre at a flynte · fowre hundreth wyntre, 244
 Bot thou haue towe to take it with · tondre or broches,
 Al thi laboure is loste · and al thi longe trauaille;
 For may no fyre flaumbe make · faille it his kynde.
 So is the holy gost god · and grace with-outen mercy 248
 To alle vnkynde creatures · Cryst hym-self witnesseth,

Amen dico vobis, nescio vos, etc.

Be vnkynde to thin euene-cristene · and al that thou canst
 bidden,
 Delen and do penaunce · day and nyȝte euere,
 And purchace al the pardoun · of Pampiloun and Rome, 252
 And indulgences ynowe · and be *ingratus* to thi kynde,
 The holy goste hereth the nouȝt · ne helpe may the by resoun;
 For vnkyndenesse quencheth hym · that he can nouȝte shyne,
 Ne brenne ne blase clere · for blowyng of vnkyndenesse. 256
 Poule the apostle · preueth wher I lye,

Si linguis hominum loquar, etc.

For-thy beth war, ȝe wyse men · that with the worlde deleth,
 That riche ben and resoun knoweth · reuleth wel ȝowre soule.
 Beth nouȝte vnkynde, I conseilte ȝow · to ȝowre euene-crustene.
 For many of ȝow riche men · bi my soule, men telleth, 261
 ȝe brenne, but ȝe blaseth nouȝte · that is a blynde bekene;

Non omnis qui dicit domine, domine, intrabit, etc.

Diues deyed dampned · for his vnkyndenesse
 Of his mete and his moneye · to men that it neded. 264

B. 258. worlde WCRYB; wolde L.

C. 203. wile P. deyn P. 204. *From* I; also in EMFTG; P omits
 this line. 205. P om. as. 206. meerk P. 213. PE ins. no before flamme.
 214. þe EMIFTG; P om. 215. wittnesse P. 220. þe IMFTG; PE om.

So wol the fader for-ȝyuen · folke of mylde hertes, 200
 That rufulliche repenten · and restitucion maken,
 In as muche as thei mowen · amenden and payen,
 And yf hit sufficith nat for a-seth · that in suche wille deyen,
 Mercy, for his mekenesse · wil make good the remenant. 204
 And as the wicke and the warme fuyr · wol make a fayr flamme
 For to murthen men with · that in merke sytten;
 So wol Crist, of hus curtesye · and men crye hym mercy,
 Bothe for-ȝeuen and for-ȝuten · and ȝut bydde for ous 208
 To the fader of heuene · for-ȝyuenesse to haue.

Ac hewe fuyr of a flynt · four hundred wynter;
 Bote thou haue tache to take hit with · tunder and broches,
 Al thy labour is lost · and al thy long trauayl; 212
 For may no fuyr flamme make · faille hit hus kynde.
 So is the holigost god · and grace with-oute mercy
 To alle vnkynde creatures · as Crist hym-self wittnesseth;

Amen dico uobis, nescio vos.

Beo vnkynde to thyn emcrystene · and al that thow canst bidde,
 Dele and do penaunce · day and nyght euere, 217
 And porchase al the pardoun · of Paumpelon and of Rome,
 And indulgences ynowe · and be ingrat to thy kynde,
 The holygost huyreth the nat · ne helpeth the, be thow certayn.
 For vnkyndenesse quencheth hym · that he can nat shyne, 221
 Ne brenne, ne blase cleer · for blowynge of vnkyndenesse.
 Seynt Paul the apostel · proueth wher ich lye;

Si linguis hominum loquar, etc.

For-thi beoth war, ȝe wyse men · that with the worlde deleth,
 That ryche beon and reson knowen · reuleth wel ȝoure soule.
 Beoth nat vnkynde, ich consaile ȝou · to ȝoure emcristene. 226
 For menye of ȝow ryche men · by my saule, ich lye nat,
 ȝe brenneth, ac ȝe blaseth nat · and that is a blynde bekne;

*Non omnis qui dicit michi domine, domine, intrabit in
 regnum celorum.*

Mynne ȝe nat, riche men · to which a meschaunce 229
 That *Dives* deyed, and dampned was · for hus vnkyndenesse
 Of hus mete and of hus moneye · to men that hit neodede?

221. queyncheþ P. can EIFT; ne can M; P om. 223. wer P. 224.
 wordle P. 227. ȝow IMFTG; PE om. ryke (for ryche) P; see l. 225.
 228. michi in F only. 230. was TG; is M; PEI om.

Vch a riche I rede · rewarde at hym take,
 And gyueth 3owre good to that god · that grace of ariseth.
 For thei that ben vnkynde to his · hope I none other,
 But thei dwelle there *Diues* is · dayes with-uten ende. 268
 Thus is vnkyndenesse the contrarie · that quencheth, as it were,
 The grace of the holy gooste · goddes owne kynde.
 For that kynde dothe, vnkynde fordoth · as these cursed theues,
 Vnkynde cristene men · for coueityse and enuye, 272
 Sleeth a man for his moebles · wyth mouth or wyth handes.
 For that the holygoste hath to kepe · tho harlotes destroyeth,
 The which is lyf and loue · the leye of mannes bodye.
 For euery manere good man · may be likned to a torche, 276
 Or elles to a tapre · to reuerence the trinitee;
 And who morthereþ a good man · me thynketh, by myn inwyt,
 He fordoth the leuest lyzte · that owre lorde loueth.
 Ac 3ut in many mo maneres · men offenden the holy goste;
 Ac this is the worste wyse · that any wizte myzte 281

ȝut wan he hit nat with wrang · ne with queynte slehythes, 232
 Bote ryȝtfulliche, as men rat · al hus rychesse cam hym,
 And on hym-self, seith the book · sotelede hou he myghte
 Most lordliche lyuen · and leet hus lycame werie
 Clothes of most cost · as clerkes bereth wittnesse; 236

Epulabatur splendide, et induebatur bisso et purpura.

And for he was a nigard · to the neodful poure,
 For godes treitour he is tolde · for al hus trewe catel,
 And dampned is and dwelleth · with the deuel in helle.
 Suththe he with-oute wiles wan · and wel myghte a-temye 240
 Lordliche for to lyuen · and likyngliche be clothed,
 And is in helle for al that · how wole riche nouthe
 Excuse hem that beth vnkynde · and ȝut here catel wonne
 With wiles and with luther wittes · and ȝut wollen nat atemye
 To gon semliche ne sitte · sith holy writ techeth, 245
 That that wikkedliche is wonne · to wasten hit, and to make
 frendes?

Facite uobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis.

Eche a riche man, ich rede · reward her-of take,
 And ȝeueth ȝoure good to that god · that grace of ariseth. 248
 For ȝe that ben vnhende to hyse · hope ȝe none other,
 Bote to dwelle ther *Dives* is · dayes with-uten ende.
 Thus is vnkyndenesse kid · and aquencheth, as hit were,
 The grace of the holygost · godes owene kynde; 252
 For that that kynde doth · vnkynde for-doth.
 Acorsede theoues, vnkynde Cristene men · for couetise and enuye
 Sleeth a man for hus meobles · with mouth other with handes;
 For that the holy gost hath to kepe · suche harlotes destruyen,
 The whiche is lyf and loue · the lye of mannes body. 257
 For euery maner good man · may be lykned to a torche,
 Other elles to a taper · to reuerence with the trinite;
 And ho so morthereþ a good man · me thynketh, by myn in-witt,
 He for-doth the light that oure lorde · loketh to haue worsshep of.

And ȝut in mo maneres · men offendeth the holy gost; 262
 Ac this is the worste wise · that eny wight myghte

C. 233. ryȝthfulliche P. rat EMIT; *miswritten* þat P. 234. sotelede P.
 240. whiles (*for* wiles) P. 245. sittþ P. 248. goud P. 251. kid T; PEMFI
om. aqueyncheþ P. 254. vnkende P; *but see* l. 253. 255. Sleehþ P.
 meobles EF; mebles MIG; noebles P. 258. lycknede P. 259. to (1) EMFTG;
 PI *om.* 260. morþrerþ P. goud P. by EIFG; be MT; in P. 263.
 whight P.

Synnen aȝein the seynt spirit · assenten to destruye,
 For coueityse of any kynnes thinge · that Cryst dere bouȝte.
 How myȝte he axe mercy · or any mercy hym helpe, 284
 That wykkedlich and willefullich · wolde mercy anynte?
 Innocence is nexte god · and nyȝte and day it crieth,
 ‘Veniaunce, veniaunce · forȝiue be it neuere,
 That shent vs and shadde owre blode · forshapte vs, as it were;
Vindica sanguinem iustorum!

Thus ‘veniaunce, veniaunce’ · verrey charite asketh; 289
 And sith holicherche and charite · chargeth this so sore,
 Leue I neure that owre lorde wil loue · that charite lakketh,
 Ne haue pite for any preyere · there that he pleyneth.’ 292

‘I pose I hadde synned so · and shulde now deye,
 And now am sory, that so · the seint spirit agulte,
 Confesse me, and crye his grace · god, that al made,
 And myldliche his mercy axe · myȝte I nouȝte be saued?’ 296
 ‘ȝus,’ seide the Samaritan · ‘so wel thow myȝte repente,
 That riȝtwisnesse thorw repentance · to reuthe myȝte torne.
 Ac it is but selden yseye · there sothennesse bereth witnesse,
 Any creature that is coupable · afor a kynges iustice, 300
 Be raunsoned for his repentaunce · there alle resoun hym
 dampneth.

For there that partye pursueth · the pele is so huge,
 That the kyng may do no mercy · til bothe men acorde,
 And eyther haue equite · as holy writ telleth; 304

Numquam dimittitur peccatum, donec restituatur ablatum.

Thus it fareth bi suche folke · that falsely al her lyues
 Euel lyuen and leten nouȝte · til lyf hem forsake;
 Drede of desperacion · dryueth a-weye thanne grace,
 That mercy in her mynde · may nauȝt thanne falle; 308
 Good hope, that helpe shulde · to wanhope torneth—
 Nouȝt of the nounpowere of god · that he ne is myȝtful
 To amende al that amys is · and his mercy grettere
 Than alle owre wykked werkes · as holiwrit telleth, 312

Misericordia eius super omnia opera eius.

B. 304. *donec* is in Y only; the two words following are supplied from Pass. v. 279. 307, 308. *These lines are in R only.*

Synegen a-ȝens the *seynt esprit* · assenten to destruye, 264
 For couetyse of eny kynne thyng · that Cryst dere boughte.
 How myghte he aske mercy · other eny mercy hym defende,
 That wikkidliche and wilfulliche · wolde mercy anyente?
 Innocence is next god · and nyght and day hit cryeth, 268
 ‘Veniaunce! veniaunce! · for-ȝeue be hit neuere,
 That shende ous and shadde oure blod · for-shupte ous, as hit
 semede;

Vindica sanguinem iustorum!

Thus ‘veniaunce! veniaunce!’ · verray charite asketh;
 And suthen charite, that holychurche is · chargeth this so sore,
 Leyue ich neuere that oure lorde · atte laste ende 273
 Wol louye that lyf that loue · and leel charite destruyen.’

‘Ich pose ich hadde syneged so,’ quath ich · ‘and shold
 nouthe deye,

And now am ich sory that ich so · the *seynt esprit* agulte, 276
 Confesse me and crye hus grace · god that al made,
 And myldeliche hus mercy aske · myghte ich nat be saued?’
 ‘ȝus,’ seide the Samaritan · ‘so thou myghtest repente,
 That ryghtwisnesse thorgh repentaunce · to reuthe myghte turne.
 Ac hit is bote selde seyn · ther sothnesse bereth wittnesse 281
 Eny creature be coupable · by-for a kynges Iustice,
 Be yraunsoned for repentaunce · ther al reson hym dampneth.
 Ther that partye porsueth · the apeel is so huge, 284
 May no kynge mercy graunt · til bothe men a-corden,
 That ayther partye haue equite · as holy writt witnesseth;

Nunquam dimittitur peccatum, etc.

Thus hit fareth by suche folke · that folwen here owene wil,
 That vuel lyuen and leten nat · til hem for-sake synne. 288
 Drede of desperacion · thenne dryueth a-wey grace,
 That mercy in here mynde · may nat thenne falle;
 For good hope that hem helpe sholde · to wanhope turneth,
 And nat of the nounpower of god · that he nys ful of myghte
 To amenden al that amys is · and hus mercy grettour 293
 Than alle oure wikkede werkus · as holy writ telleth,

Misericordia eius super omnia opera eius.

C. 272. P *ins.* þat before charite. 276. PE *ins.* dude after so. PE *ins.*
 to before agulte. 280. tow (*for to*) P. 281. seild P. 283. yraunsende P.
 286. equite EITG; a quyte P. wittnesse P. 291. whamhope (*sic*) P.
 292. nounpower F; noun-poer I; vnpower PE.

Ac, ar his riȝtwisnesse to reuthe tourne · some restitucioun
bihoueth;

His sorwe is satisfaccioun · for hym that may nouȝte paye.

Thre thinges there ben · that doth a man by strengthe
Forto fleen his owne hous · as holywryt sheweth. 316

That one is a wikked wyf · that wil nouȝt be chastet;

Her fiere fleeth fro hyr · for fere of her tonge.

And if his hous be vnhiȝed · and reyne on his bedde,
He seketh and seketh · til he slepe drye. 320

And whan smoke and smolder · smyt in his syȝte,

It doth hym worse than his wyf · or wete to slepe.

For smoke and smolder · smyteth in his eyen,

Til he be blere-nyed or blynde · and hors in the throte, 324

Cougheth, and curseth · that Cryst gyf hem sorwe

That sholde brynge in better wode · or blowe it til it brende.

Thise thre that I telle of · ben thus to vnderstonde;

The wyf is owre wikked flesshe · that wil nouȝt be chastet,
For kynde cleueth on hym euere · to contrarie the soule. 329

And though it falle, it fynt skiles · that frelete it made;

And that is liztly forȝeuen · and forȝeten bothe,

To man that mercy asketh · and amende thenketh. 332

The reyne that reyneth · there we reste sholde,

Ben sikenesses and sorwes · that we suffren oft,

As Powle the apostle · to the peple tauȝte,

Virtus in infirmitate perficitur, etc.

And though that men make · moche deol in her angre, 336

And ben inpacient in here penaunce · pure resoun knoweth,

That thei han cause to contrarie · by kynde of her sykenesse;

And liztlich owre lorde · at her lyues ende,

Hath mercy on suche men · that so yuel may suffre. 340

Ac the smoke and the smolder · that smyt in owre eyghen,

That is coueityse and vnkyndenesse · that quencheth goddes
mercy.

For vnkyndenesse is the contrarie · of alkynnes resoun;

For there nys syke ne sori · ne non so moche wrecche, 344

That he ne may louye, and hym lyke · and lene of his herte

Good wille and good worde · bothe wisshen and willen

B. 323. in WYB; LRC *om.* 330. þat WCRBY; þe L. 337. ben W;
be R; LCYB *om.* 346. Goed (*for* Good) L.

Ac er hus rightwisnesse to reuthe turne · restitution hit maketh ;
As sorwe of herte is satisfaccion · for suche as may nat paye.

Ac thre thynges ther beoth · that doth a man to sterte 297
Out of his owene hous · as holy writ sheweth.

That on is a wikkede wif · that wol nat be chastet ;
Hure fere fleeth fro huere · for fere of huere tounge. 300
And yf hus hous be vnheled · and reyne on hus bedde,
He seketh and seketh · til he slepe drye.

Ac when smoke and smorthre · smyt in hus eyen,
Hit doth hym wors than hus wyf · other wete to slepe. 304
For thorw smoke and smorthre · smerteth hus syghte,
Tyl he be bler-eyed other blynde · and the borre in hus throte,
Koweth and corseth · that Crist ȝyue hym sorwe

That sholde brynge yn bettere wode · other blowe til hit brente.

These thre that ich telle of · thus beoth to vnderstonde ; 309
The wif is oure wikkede fleshe · that wol nat be chastet,
For kynde clyueth on hym euere · to contrarie the soule.
And thauh he falle, he fynt skyles · that frelete hit made ; 312
And that is lyghtliche for-ȝyue · and for-ȝute bothe
To man, that mercy asketh · and amende thenketh.

Ac the reyn that reyneth · ther we reste sholde,
Beoth syknesses and other sorwes · that we suffren ofte, 316
As seynt Paul the apostel · in hus pistles techeth,

Virtus in infirmitate perficitur.

And thauh men maken · mucche deol in here angre,
And beo inpacient in here penaunces · pure reson knoweth,
That thei han cause to contrarien · by kynde of here syknesse ;
And lightliche oure lorde · at here lyues ende 321

Hath mercy of suche men · that vuel may suffrye.
Ac the smoke and the smorthre · that smyt in oure eyen,
That is couetise and vnkyndenesse · which quencheth godes mercy.
For vnkyndnesse is contrarie · of alle kynne reson ; 325
For ther ne is syk ne sory · ne non so mucche wrecche,
That he ne may louye, and hym lyke · and lene of hus herte
Good wil, good worde · bothe wusshen and wylnen 328

C. 299. chastede P. 301. vnhelede P. reyne EFTG ; ryne PI ; see l. 315.
on EMIFTG ; in P. 302. til IFTG ; er P. 304. whete P. 306. blereyde P.
308. bryngge P. 310. þat EMG ; P om. chastede P. 315. reyneþ EIFT ;
ryneþ P. 316. ofte MFT ; ouht P. 317. P ins. *Nam* before *Virtus*.
323. smyȝt P. 328. Goude P. goud P. whusshen P.

Alle manere men · mercy and forȝifnesse,
 And louye hem liche hym-self · and his lyf amende.— 348
 I may no lenger lette,' quod he · and lyarde he pryked,
 And went away as wynde · and there-with I awaked.

PASSUS XVIII.

Passus xviii^{us}, et tercius de Dobet.

WOLLEWARD and wete-shoed · went I forth after,
 As a reccheles renke · that of no wo reccheth,
 And ȝede forth lyke a lorel · al my lyf-tyme,
 Tyl I wex wery of the worlde · and wyned eft to slepe, 4
 And lened me to a lenten · and longe tyme I slepte;
 And of Crystes passioun and penaunce · the peple that of-rauȝte,
 Reste me there, and rutte faste · tyl *ramis-palmarum*;
 Of gerlis and of *gloria laus* · gretly me dremed, 8
 And how *osanna* by orgonye · olde folke songen.
 One semblable to the Samaritan · and some-del to Piers the Plowman,
 Barfote on an asse bakke · botelees cam prykye,
 Wyth-oute spores other spere · spakliche he loked, 12
 As is the kynde of a kynȝte · that cometh to be dubbed,
 To geten hem gylte spores · or galoches ycouped.
 Thanne was Faith in a fenestre · and cryde '*a! fili David!*'
 As doth an heralde of armes · whan auntrous cometh to iustes.
 Olde Iuwes of Ierusalem · for Ioye thei songen, 17

Benedictus qui venit in nomine domini.

Thanne I frayned at Faith · what al that fare be-mente,
 And who sholde Iouste in Iherusalem · 'Iesus,' he seyde,
 'And fecche that the fende claymeth · Piers fruit the Plowman.'
 'Is Piers in this place?' quod I · and he preynte on me, 21
 'This Iesus of his gentrice · wole Iuste in Piers armes,
 In his helme and in his haberioun · *humana natura*;
 That Cryst be nouȝt biknowe here · for *consummatus deus*, 24

B. 7. Reste WCOY; Rested LR. 11. prikye WO; prekie B; pryke LC.
 16. auntrous RO; aunterous C; Auentrous W; auntuos L. 18. bemente
 RO; bement L. 24. *consummatus* L.

Alle manere of men · mercy and for-zeueneſſe, 329
 And louye hem yliche hym-sylf · that hus lyf a-mende.
 Ich may no lenger lette,' quath he · and lyarde he prykede,
 And wente away as the wynde · and ther-with ich awakede.

Hic explicit passus tercius de Dobet.

PASSUS XXI.

Hic incipit passus quartus de Dobet.

WO-werie and wetschod · wente ich forth after,
 As a recheles renke · that reccheth nat of sorwe,
 And zeode forth lyke a lorell · al my lyf-tyme,
 Til ich wax wery of this worlde · and wilnede este to slepe, 4
 And lenede me til lenten · and longe tyme ich slepte.
 Of gurles and of *gloria laus* · gretliche me dremede,
 And how *osanna* by orgone · olde folk songe.
 On was semblable to the Samaritan · and somdel to Peers Plouhman,
 Barfot on an asse bak · bootles cam prykye, 9
 With-oute spores other spere · and sprakliche he lokede,
 As is the kynde of a knyght · that cometh to be doubted,
 To geten hus gylte spores · and galoches y-couped, 12
 Then was Faith in a fenestre · and cryde, '*a ! filij David !*'
 As doth an heraud of armes · when auntrous cometh to Iustes.
 Olde Iewes of Ierusalem · for Ioye thei songen,

Benedictus qui venit in nomine domini.

Thenne ich fraynede at Faith · 'what al that fare by-mente,
 And ho sholde Iusten in Ierusalem?' · 'Iesus,' he seide, 17
 'And fecche that the feond cleymeth · Peers frut the Plouhman.'
 'Ys Peers in this place?' quath ich · and he preynkte vpon me,
 '*Liberum-dei-arbitrium*,' quath he · 'for loue hath vndertake 20
 That this Iesus of hus gentrise · shal Iouste in Peers armes,
 In hus helme and in hus haberion · *humana natura*;
 That Crist be nat knowe · for *consummatus deus*,

C. 1. wetschode P. 2. richeles P. 4. to IMFTG; PE *om.* 7.
 orgone F; orgene IT; orgne PE. folk FTG; men PEM. 12. y-couped
 IMFT; y-coped PG. 14. auntries (*sic*) PEIMG; auntries F; auntries T.
 16. fraynnede P. at IMFT; of G; PE *om.* 21. þis ME; þys G; þes P.
 genterise P. 22. in IMET; PFG *om.* 23. þa (*for* þat) P.

In Piers paltok the Plowman · this priker shal ryde ;
 For no dynte shal hym dere · as *in deitate patris.*
 ‘Who shal Iuste with Iesus?’ quod I · ‘Iuwes or scribes?’
 ‘Nay,’ quod he, ‘the foule fende · and Fals-dome and Deth. 28
 Deth seith he shal fordo · and adown brynge
 Al that lyueth or loketh · in londe or in watere.
 Lyf seyth that he likth · and leyth his lif to wedde,
 That for al that Deth can do · with-in thre dayes, 32
 To walke and fecche fro the fende · Piers fruite the Plowman,
 And legge it there hym lyketh · and Lucifer bynde,
 And forbete and adown brynge · bale and deth for euere :

O mors, ero mors tua!

Thanne cam *Pilatus* with moche peple · *sedens pro tribunali*,
 To se how doughtilich Deth sholde do · and deme her botheres rizte.
 The Iuwes and the Iustice · azeine Iesu thei were, 38
 And al her courte on hym cryde · *crucifige* sharpe.
 Tho put hym forth a piloure · bifor Pilat, and seyde, 40
 ‘This Iesus of owre Iewes temple · Iaped and dispised,
 To fordone it on o day · and in thre dayes after
 Edefye it eft newe · (here he stant that seyde it)
 And 3it maken it as moche · in al manere poyntes, 44
 Bothe as longe and as large · bi loft and by grounde.’

‘*Crucifige,*’ quod a cacchepolle · ‘I warante hym a wicche!’
 ‘*Tolle, tolle!*’ quod an other · and toke of kene thornes,
 And bigan of kene thorne · a gerelande to make, 48
 And sette it sore on his hed · and seyde in envye,
 ‘*Aue, rabby!*’ quod that ribaude · and threw redes at hym,
 Nailed hym with thre nailles · naked on the rode,
 And poyoun on a pole · thei put vp to his lippes, 52
 And bede hym drynke his deth-yuel · his dayes were ydone.
 ‘And 3if that thow sotil be · help now thi-seluen,
 If thow be Cryst, and kynges sone · come downe of the rode ;

In Peeres plates the Plouhman · this prykiere shal ryde; 24
 For no dint shal hym dere · as *in deitate patris*.
 ‘Ho shal Iouste with Iesus,’ quath ich · ‘Iewes, other scribes?’
 ‘Nay,’ quath Faith, ‘bote the feond · and Fals-dom-to-deye.
 Deth seith he wol for-do · and a-doun brynge 28
 Al that lyueth other loketh · a londe and a watere.
 Lyf seith that he lyeth · and hath leyde hus lyf to wedde,
 That for al that Deth can do · with-inne thre dayes,
 To walke and fecche fro the feonde · Peers frut the Plouhman,
 And legge hit ther hym lyketh · and Lucifer bynde, 33
 And forbete and bringe adoun · bale and deth for euere;

O mors, ero mors tua!

Thenne cam *Pilatus* with muche people · *sedens pro tribunali*,
 To seo hou douhtliche Deth sholde do · and deme here beyer ryght.
 The Iuwes and the Iustices · aȝens Iesus they were, 37
 And alle the court cryede · ‘*crucifige*’ lowde.
 Thenne put hym forth a pelour · by-for Pilat, and seyde,
 ‘Thys Iesus of oure Iuwen temple · Iapede and despisede, 40
 To for-don hit on a day · and in thre dayes after
 Edefien hit este newe—· her he stant that seyde hit—
 And ȝut make hit as muche · in alle manere poyntes,
 Bothe as longe and as large · aloft and a-grounde, 44
 And as wyde as hit euere was · this we witnessen alle.’
 ‘*Crucifige*,’ quath a kachepol · ‘he can of wicche-crafte.’
 ‘*Tolle, tolle*,’ quath another · and toke of kene thornes,
 And by-gan of a grene thorne · a garlaunde to make, 48
 And sette hit sore on hus hefd · and suthe seyde in enuye,
 ‘*Aue, rabbi*,’ quath that ribaud · and reodes shotte at hus eyen:—
 And nailede hym with thre nayles · naked on the rode,
 And with a pole poyson · putten to hus lippes, 52
 And beden hym drynke, hus deth to lette · and hus dayes lengthen;
 And seide, ‘yf he sothfast beo · he wol hym-self helpen;
 And now, yf thou be Criste · godes sone of heuene,
 Come a-doune of this rode · and thenne wol we leyue 56

C. 33. hit MG; it-IFT; hym PE. 34. forbete MI; forbite PEFTG. and
 bringe adoun MFG; adoun and brynge PET. and (3) MF; PEITG *om.*
ero—tua EF; *tua ero mors* P. 36. deyme P. 38. lowede P. 39. forth
 IMFTG; PE *om.* 43. hit MEG; it IFT; P *om.* 45. whitnessen P.
 49. on EMIFTG; in P. 50. rabbi M; rabi PITG. and MEIFTG; a P.
 53. beden IMT; bid PE. 54. sothfast P.

Thanne shul we leue that Lyf the loueth · and wil nouȝt lete
the deye!’ 56

‘*Consummatum est*,’ quod Cryst · and comsed forto swowe
Pitousliche and pale · as a prisoun that deyeth;
The lorde of lyf and of lizte · tho leyed his eyen togideres.
The daye for drede with-drowe · and derke bicam the sonne, 60
The wal wagged and clef · and al the worlde quaued.
Ded men for that dyne · come out of depe graues,
And tolde whi that tempest · so longe tyme dured.
‘For a bitter bataille’ · the ded bodye sayde; 64
‘Lyf and Deth in this derknesse · her one fordoth her other;
Shal no wizte wite witterly · who shal haue the maystrye,
Er Sondey aboute sonne-rysyng’ · and sank with that til erthe.
Some seyde that he was goddes sone · that so faire deyde, 68

Vere filius dei erat iste, etc.

And somme saide he was a wicche · ‘good is that we assaye.
Where he be ded or nouȝte ded · doun er he be taken.’

Two theues also · tholed deth that tyme,
Vppon a crosse bisydes Cryst · so was the comune lawe. 72
A cacchepole cam forth · and craked bothe her legges,
And her armes after · of eyther of tho theues.
Ac was no boy so bolde · goddes body to touche;
For he was knyȝte and kynges sone · kynde forȝaf that tyme, 76
That non harlot were so hardy · to leyne hande vppon hym.
Ac there cam forth a knyȝte · with a kene spere ygrounde,
Hizte *Longeus*, as the lettre telleth · and longe had lore his sizte.
Bifor Pilat and other peple · in the place he houed; 80
Maugre his many tethe · he was made that tyme
To take the spere in his honde · and Iusten with Iesus;
For alle thei were vnhardy · that houed on hors or stode,
To touche hym or to taste hym · or take hym down of rode. 84
But this blynde bacheler thanne · bar hym thorough the herte;
The blode spronge down by the spere · and vnspered the kniȝtes
eyen.

Thanne fel the knyȝte vpon knees · and cryed hym mercy—

That Lyf the louyeth · and wol nat lete the deye.'
 ' *Consummatum est*, ' quath Crist · and comsede for to sounye
 Pitousliche and paal · as prison that deyeth; ,
 The lord of lyf and of light · tho leyde hus eyen togederes. 60
 The day for drede ther-of with-drow · and deork by-cam the sonne;
 The wal of the temple to-cleef · euene a two peces;
 The hard roche al to-rof · and ryght derk nyght hit semede;
 The erthe quook and quashte · as hit quyke were, 64
 And dede men for that deon · comen oute of deope graues,
 And tolden why that tempest · so longe tyme durede.
 'For a byter bataile' · the dede bodye seyde,
 'Lyf and Deth in this deorknesse · her on for-doth that other,
 Ac shal no wist wite witerliche · ho shal haue the mastrye, 69
 Er Soneday, a-boute sonne-rysyng' · and sank with that til erthe.
 Somme seiden he was godes sone · that so faire deyede;

Vere filius dei erat iste:

Some seiden, 'he can of sorcerye · good is that we a-saye 72
 Wher he be ded other nat ded · doun er he be take.'

Two theoues ther wer · that tholeden deth that tyme
 Vpon crois by-side Crist · so was the comune lawe.
 Quikliche cam a cacchepol · and craked a-two here legges, 76
 And here armes after · of euerich of tho theoues.
 Ac ther was no boye so bolde · godes body to touche,
 For he was knyght and kynges sone · kynde for-3af that tyme
 That no boye hadde hardinesse · hym to touche in deyinge. 80
 Ac ther cam forth a blynde knyght · with a kene spere y-grounde,
 Hihte *Longeus*, as the lettere telleth · and longe hadde lore hus sight.
 By-fore Pilat and other peuple · in the place he houede.
 Ac maugre hus meny teth · he was mad that tyme 84
 To Iouste with Iesus · this blynde Iuwe *Longeus*;
 For alle hij were vnhardy · that houede ther other stode,
 To touche hym other to tryne hym · other to take hym doun
 and graue hym, 87
 Bote this blynde bachelere · that bar hym thorw the herte;
 The blood sprang doun by the sper · and vnsperrede the
 knyghtes eyen.
 Tho fel the knyght vpon knees · and cryed Iesu mercy—

C. 62. pices P. 63. hit G; it IFT; PE om. 64. quashete P. 66. wy P.
 69. wist IF; wist G; whit P. 81. a (2) IMT; PEFG om. 84. maugrey P.
 90. fel MFTG; feol P.

'Aȝeyne my wille it was, lorde · to wownde ȝow so sore !' 88
 He seighed and sayde · 'sore it me athynketh;
 For the dede that I haue done · I do me in ȝowre grace;
 Haue on me reuth, riȝtful Iesu!' · and right with that he wept.

Thanne gan Faith felly · the fals Iuwes dispise, 92
 Called hem caytyues · acursed for euere,
 For this foule vyleynye · 'veniaunce to ȝow alle!
 To do the blynde bete hym ybounde · it was a boyes conseil.
 Cursed caytyue! · kniȝthod was it neuere 96

To mysdo a ded body · by day or by nyȝte.
 The gree ȝit hath he geten · for al his grete wounde.
 For ȝowre champioun chiualer · chief kniȝt of ȝow alle,
 ȝelt hym recreaunt rennyng · riȝt at Iesus wille. 100
 For be this derkenesse ydo · his deth worth avenged,
 And ȝe, lordeynes, han ylost · for Lyf shal haue the maistrye,
 And ȝowre fraunchise, that fre was · fallen is in thraldome,
 And ȝe, cherles, and ȝowre children · chieue shal ȝe neure, 104
 Ne haue lordship in londe · ne no londe tylle,
 But al bareyne be · and vsurye vsen,
 Which is lyf that owre lorde · in alle lawes acurseth.
 Now ȝowre good dayes ar done · as Danyel prophecied, 108
 Whan Cryst cam, of her kyngdom · the croune shulde cesse;
Cum veniat sanctus sanctorum, cessabit vnixio vestra.'

What for fere of this ferly · and of the fals Iuwes,
 I drowe me in that derkenesse · to *decendit ad inferna*.
 And there I sawe sothely · *secundum scripturas*, 112
 Out of the west coste · a wenche, as me thouȝte,
 Cam walkynge in the wey · to-helle-ward she loked.
 Mercy hiȝt that mayde · a meke thyng with-alle,
 A ful benygne buirde · and boxome of speche. 116
 Her suster, as it semed · cam softly walkynge,
 Euene out of the est · and westward she loked.
 A ful comely creature · Treuth she hiȝte,

'A-3ens my wil hit was,' quath he · 'that ich 3ow wonde made!'
 He syghede and seide · 'sore hit me for-thynketh, 92
 Of the dede that ich haue don · ich do me in 3oure grace.
 My londe and my lycame · at 3oure lykyng taketh hit,
 And haue mercy on me, ryghtful Iesul' · and ryght with that he wepte.

Thenne gan Faith foully · the false Iewes to despisen, 96
 And calde hem 'caytifs a-corsed' · for this was a vil vilanye:—
 'Veniaunce is to 3ou falle · that makede the blynde
 Beten hym that was ded · hit was a boyes dede!'

Thus Faith bi-gon to fare · with the false Iewes— 100
 'Corsede caityfs! · knyghthod was hit neuere
 To bete a body ybounde · with eny bri3t wepne,
 The gree 3ut hath he geten · for alle hus grete wondes.
 For 3oure champion chiualer · chief knyght of 3ow alle 104
 3elt hym recreaunt rennyng · ryght at Iesus wil.

For beo this deorknesse ydo · Deth worth venkised,
 And 3e, lordlinges, han lost · for Lyf shal haue the maystrie,
 And 3oure fraunchise that freo was · fallen is to thraldom, 108
 And alle 3oure children cheorles · cheuen shulle thei neuere,
 Ne haue lordshup in lond · nother lond tylie,
 And as barayne beo · and by vsure libbe,
 The whiche is lif that oure lorde · in alle lawes defendeth. 112
 Now beoth 3oure goode dayes don · as Dāniel of 3ow telleth,
 When Crist with crois ouercam · 3oure kyngdom shal to-cleue;

Cum uenerit sanctus sanctorum, cessabit unctio uestra.'

What for fere of this ferly · and of the false Iewes,
 Ich drow in that deorknesse · to *descendit ad inferna*, 116
 And ther ich seyh sothliche · *secundum scripturas*,
 Out of the west, as it were · a wenche, as me thouhte,
 Cam walkyng in the way · to-helleward hue lokede.
 Mercy hihte that mayde · a mylde thyng with-alle, 120
 And a ful benygne burde · and buxum of speche.
 Heore sustre, as hit semede · cam softly walkyng
 Euene out of the est · and westwarde hue thouhte,
 A comely creature and clene · Treuthe hue hihte. 124

C. 95. and IFT; PEMG *om.* 100. *From M; PEIFGT omit this line.*
 102. bri3th P. 104. campion P. 108. fraunchises P. 109. þe (*for*
 thei) P. 118. weynche P. 119. he (*for* hue) P; heo T; sche IM. 121.
 benygne P. 123. he (*for* hue) PFG; sche IMT. 124. heo (*for* hue) G;
 sheo P; sche IM; scheo F.

For the vertue that hir folwed · aferd was she neuere. 120
 Whan this maydenes mette · Mercy and Treuth,
 Eyther axed other · of this grete wonder,
 Of the dyne and of the derknesse · and how the daye rowed,
 And which a lizte and a leme · lay befor helle. 124
 ‘Ich haue ferly of this fare · in feith,’ seyde Treuth,
 ‘And am wendying to wyte · what this wonder meneth.’
 ‘Haue no merueille,’ quod Mercy · ‘myrthe it bytokneth.
 A mayden that hatte Marye · and moder with-out felyng 128
 Of any kynnes creature · conceyued thorw speche
 And grace of the holygoste; · wex grete with childe;
 With-uten wem · in-to this worlde she brouȝt hym;
 And that my tale be trewe · I take god to witnesse. 132
 Sith this barn was bore · ben thritti wynter passed;
 Which deyde and deth tholed · this day aboute mydday.
 And that is cause of this clips · that closeth now the sonne,
 In menyng that man shal · fro merkenesse be drawe, 136
 The while this lizte and this leme · shal Lucyfer ablende.
 For patriarkes and prophetes · han preched her-of often,
 That man shal man saue · thorw a maydenes helpe,
 And that was tynt thorw tre · tree shal it wyne, 140
 And that deth doun brouȝte · deth shal releue.’
 ‘That thou tellest,’ quod Treuth · ‘is but a tale of Waltrot!
 For Adam and Eue · and Abraham with other,
 Patriarkes and prophetes · that in peyne liggen, 144
 Leue thou neuere that ȝone lizte · hem alofte brynge,
 Ne haue hem out of helle · holde thi tonge, Mercy!
 It is but a trifle that thou tellest · I, Treuth, wote the sothe.
 For that is ones in helle · out cometh it neuere; 148
 Iob the prophete, patriarke · reproueth thi sawes,
 Quia in inferno nulla est redemptio.
 Thanne Mercy ful myldly · mouthed thise wordes,
 ‘Thorw experience,’ quod she · ‘I hope thei shal be saued.
 For venym for-doth venym · and that I proue by resoun. 152
 For of alle venymes · foulest is the scorioun,
 May no medcyne helpe · the place there he styngeth,

For the vertue that here folwede · afered was hue neuere.
 Whan theos maydenes metten · Mercy and Treuthe,
 Ayther axed of other · of this grete wonder,
 Of the deone and deorknesse · and how the day rowed, 128
 And whiche a light and a leom · lay by-fore helle.
 'Ich haue ferly of this fare · in faith,' seide Treuthe,
 'And am wendyng to wyte · what this wonder meneth.'
 'Haue no meruayle ther-of,' quath Mercy · 'murthe hit by-tokneth.
 A mayde that hatte Marie · and moder with-oute felynge
 Of eny kynde of creature · conceyuede thorw speche
 And grace of the holygost · waxe gret with childe,
 With-oute wommanes wem · in-to this worlde brouhte hym; 136
 And that my tale is trewe · ich take god to witnesse.
 Sutthen this barn was ybore · beoth thritty wynter passed,
 Deyed and deth tholed · this day a-boute mydday;
 That is the cause of this eclipse · that ouer-closeth now the sonne,
 In menyng that man shal · fro meorknesse beo drawe, 141
 The while this light and this leom · shal Lucifer a-blende.
 For patriarkes and prophetes · han prechede her-of ofte,
 That thyng that tynt was thorw treo · treo shal hit wyne, 144
 And that that deth doun brouhte · deth shal releue.'
 'That that thou tellest,' quath Treuthe · 'is bote a tale of Walterot!
 For Adam and Eue · and Abraham with othere,
 Patriarkes and prophetes · that in peyne liggen, 148
 Leyf hit neuere that 3on lyght · hem a-lofte brynge,
 Ne haue hem out of helle; · hold thy tonge, Mercy,
 Hit is trufle that thou tellest; · ich, Treuthe, wot the sothe,
 That thyng that ones was in helle · out cometh hit neuere. 152
 For Iob the parfit patriarke · repreoueth thy sawes,
Quia in inferno nulla est redemptio.
 Thenne Mercy ful myldeliche · mouthed thes wordes,
 'Thorgh experience,' quath heo · 'ich hope thei shulle be sauede.
 For venym for-doth venym · ther vecche ich euydence, 156
 That Adam and Eue · haue shullen bote.
 Of alle fretynge venymes · the vilest is the scorpion;
 May no medecyne amende · the place ther he styngeth,

C. 125. he (*for* hue) PFT; sche IM; heo G. 128. rowed PE; rouede
 IG; rowide T. 129. P *ins.* wich *before* and a. 136. wommanes FT;
 womanes M; woman E; wommen P. wordle PG. 137. trywe P. 142.
 ableynde P. 149. 3eon (*for* 3on) P.

Tyl he be ded and do ther-to · the yuel he destroyeth,
 The fyrst venymouste · thorw venym of hym-self. 156
 So shal this deth for-do · I dar my lyf legge,
 Al that Deth fordyd furste · thorw the deuelles entysynge;
 And rízt as thorw gyle · man was bigyled,
 So shal grace that bigan · make a good sleighte; 160

Ars vt artem falleret.

Now suffre we,' seyde Treuth · 'I se, as me thinketh,
 Out of the nippe of the north · nouzt ful fer hennes,
 Ríztwisnesse come rennyng · reste we the while;
 For he wote more than we · he was er we bothe.' 164
 'That is soth,' seyde Mercy · 'and I se here bi southe,
 Where Pees cometh playinge · in pacience yclothed;
 Loue hath coueyted hir longe · leue I none other
 But he sent hir some lettre · what this lizte bymeneth, 168
 That ouer-houeth helle thus; · she vs shal telle.'

Whan Pees, in pacience yclothed · approched nere hem tweyne,
 Ríztwisnesse her reuerenced · for her riche clothyng,
 And preyed Pees to telle hir · to what place she wolde, 172
 And in her gay garnementz · whom she grete thouzte?
 'My wille is to wende,' quod she · 'and welcome hem alle,
 That many day myzte I nouzte se · for merkenesse of synne.
 Adam and Eue · and other moo in helle, 176
 Moyses and many mo · mercy shal haue;
 And I shal daunce ther-to · do thow so, sustre!
 For Iesus Iusted wel · Ioye bygynneth dawe;

Ad vesperum demorabitur fletus, et ad matutinum leticia.

Loue, that is my lemman · suche lettres me sente, 180
 That Mercy, my sustre, and I · mankynde shulde saue;
 And that god hath forgyuen · and graunted me, Pees, and Mercy,
 To be mannes meynpernoure · for euere-more after.

Til he be ded, ydo ther-to · and thenne hit destroyeth 160
 The first venemoste · thorgh vertu of hym-selue.
 And so shal this deth for-do · ich dar my lyf legge,
 Al that 'Deth and the deuel · dude formest to Eue.
 Ryght as the gylour thorw gyle · by-gylede man formest, 164
 So shal grace that al by-gan · make a good ende,
 And by-gyle the gylour · and that is a good sleithe;

Ars ut artem falleret.

'Now suffre we,' seide Treuthe · 'ich seo, as me thynketh,
 Out of the nype of the north · nat ful fer hennes, 168
 Ryghtwisnesse come rennyng; · reste we the whyle;
 For hue wot more than we · hue was er we bothe.'
 'That is soth,' seide Mercy · 'and ich seo her by southe,
 Wher cometh Pees pleyng · in pacience yclothed; 172
 Loue heore hath coueyted longe · leyue ich non other
 Bote Loue haue sent heore som lettere · what this light bymeneth
 That ouere-houeth helle thus; · hue shal ous telle.'

Whenne Pees, in pacience yclothed · aproched ayther other,
 Ryghtwisnesse reuerencede Pees · in heore riche clothinge, 177
 And prayede Pees to tellen huere · to what place hue wolde,
 In heore gay garnemens · wham hue gladie thouhte?
 'My wil is to wende,' quath Pees · 'and wel-come hem alle,
 That meny day myghte ich nat seo · for meorknesse of synne.
 Adam and Eue · and other mo in helle,
 Moyses and meny mo · mercy shullen synge;
 And ich shal daunce ther-to · do al-so thow, suster! 184
 For Iesus Iousted wel · Ioye by-gynneth to dawen;

Ad uesperum demorabitur fletus, et ad matutinum leticia.

Loue that is my lemman · suche letteres me sente,
 That Mercy my suster, and ich · mankynde shulde saue;
 And that god hath for-gyue · and graunted to al mankynde,
 Mercy, my suster, and me · to maynprise hem alle. 189
 And Crist hath conuerted · the kynde of ryghtwisnesse
 In-to pees and pyte · of hus pure grace.

C. 160. destroyeth MIF; distrieth P. 162. dar EFIT; þar P. 168. feer
 (for fer) P. 169. Rythwisnesse PM. wyle P. 170. he PIFTG; but
 read hue. P. ins. þan after er. 172. ycloped EMITG; cloped PF. 175.
 he PIFTG; sche M; read hue. 176. ycloped EMITG; cloped PF.
 178. heo F; sche MI; she T; he P; read hue. 179. heo FG; sche MI;
 she T; he P; read hue. 180. weynde P. 187. shulde M; scholde E;
 shullen PF; schal ITG.

Lo! here the patent!' quod Pees · *'in pace in adygnant'*— 184
 And that this dede shal dure—· *dominium et repencem.*

'What, ranestow?' quod Rigtwysnesse · 'or thou art rigt dronke!

Leuestow that ȝonde lyte · vnlonke myȝte helpe,
 And saue mannes soule? · sustre, wene it neuere! 188

At the bygynnyng, god · gaf the dome hym-selue,
 That Adam and Eue · and alle that hem suwed
 Shulde deye doune rigte · and dwelle in pyne after,
 If that thei touched a tre · and the fruite eten. 192

Adam afterward · aȝeines his defence,
 Frette of that fruit · and forsoke, as it were,
 The loue of owre lorde · and his lore bothe,
 And solwed that the fende tange · and his felawes wille, 196
 Aȝeines resoun, I, Rigtwysnesse · recorde thus with treuth,
 That her peyne be perpetuel · and no preyere hem helpe.
 For-thi late hem chewe as thei chose · and chyde we nouȝt, sustres,
 For it is botelees bale · the bite that thei eten.' 200

'And I shal preue,' quod Pees · 'her peyne mote haue ende,
 And wo in-to wel · mowe wende atte laste;
 For had thei wist of no wo · wel had thei nouȝte knowen.
 For no wize wote what wel is · that neuere wo suffred, 204
 Ne what is hote hunger · that had neuere defaute.

If no nyȝte ne were · no man, as I leue,
 Shulde wite witterly · what day is to mene;

Shulde neuere rigte riche man · that lyueth in reste and ese 208
 Wyte what wo is · ne were the deth of kynde.
 So god that bygan al · of his good wille
 Bycam man of a mayde · mankynde to saue,
 And suffred to be solde · to see the sorwe of deyinge, 212

Lo, here the patente!' quath Pees · '*in pace in idipsum*— 192
And that this dede shal dure—· *dormiam et requiescam*.'

'Rauest thou?' quath Ryghtwisnesse · 'other thou art ryght
dronke!

Leyuest thou that 3on light · vnlouke myghte helle,
And saue mannes soule? · suster, wene hit neuere! 196
At the begynnyng of the worlde · god gaf the dom hymselfe,
That Adam and Eue · and hus issue alle
Sholden deye doun-ryht · and dwelle in peyne euere,
Yf thei touchede the treo · and of the frut eten. 200

Adam afterwarde · a-3ens hus defense,
Faste fret of that frut · and for-soke, as hit were,
The leel loue of oure lorde · and hus lore bothe,
And folwede that the feonde tauhte · and hus fleshes wil, 204
A3ens reson and ryghtwysnesse; · recorde this with treuthe,
That here peyne is perpetuel · no preyere may hem helpe.
For-thi let hem chewe as thei chose · and chide we nat, susteres,
For hit is a botles bale · the byte that thei eten.' 208

'And ich shal preye,' quath Pees · 'here peyne mote haue ende,
That here wo in-to wele · wende mote atte laste;
For hadde thei wist of no wo · wele hadde thei nat knowe;
For wot no wight what wele is · that neuere wo suffrede, 212
Ne what is hot hunger · that hadde neuere defaute.

Ho couthe kyndeliche · with colour discriue,
Yf alie the worlde were whit · other swan-whit alle thynges?
Yf no nyght ne were · no man, as ich leyue, 216
Sholde wite witerly · what day were to mene.

Ne hadde god suffred of som · other than hym-selue,
He hadde nat wist wyterly · whether deth wer soure other sweyte.
For sholde neuere right riche man · that lyueth in reste and hele
Ywyte what wo is · ne were the deth of kynde. 221

So god that al by-gan · of hus good wil
By-cam man of a mayde · mankynde to saue,
And suffrede to be solde · to seo the sorwe of deyyng, 224

C. 193. *dormiam*, &c. is from EIMFTG; P om. 194. art IMFT; crt
PEG. 204. sheshes (*for* fleshes) P. 209. P ins. an *before* ende. 210.
atte be (*for* atte, *wrongly*) P. 212. wight IFT; whit P. 214. wip T
(*which seems the right reading*); wit P; with, *alt. to* whit E; white IF;
whyzt G; whijt M. 215. Hif (*for* Yf) P. 216. ne ITG; PEMF om.
217. whiterly P. 218. suffrede P. 219. weper P.

The which vnknitteth al kare · and comsynge is of reste.
 For til *modicum* mete with vs · I may it wel avowe,
 Wote no wizte, as I wene · what is ynough to mene.

For-thi god of his goodnesse · the fyrste gome Adam, 216
 Sette hym in solace · and in souereigne myrthe;
 And sith he suffred hym synne · sorwe to fele,
 To wite what wel was · kyndelich to knowe it.
 And after god aunted hym-self · and toke Adames kynde, 220
 To wyte what he hath suffred · in thre sondri places,
 Bothe in heuene, and in erthe · and now til helle he thynketh,
 To wite what al wo is · that wote of al Ioye.

So it shal fare bi this folke; · her foly and her synne 224
 Shall lere hem what langour is · and lisse with-uten ende.
 Wote no wighte what werre is · there that pees regneth,
 Ne what is witterly wel · til weyllowey hym teche.'

Thanne was there a wizte · with two brode eyen, 228
 Boke hizte that beupere · a bolde man of speche.
 'By godes body,' quod this Boke · 'I wil bere witnesse,
 That tho this barne was ybore · there blased a sterre,
 That alle the wyse of this worlde · in o witte acordeden, 232
 That such a barne was borne · in Bethleem citee,
 That mannes soule sholde saue · and synne destroye.
 And alle the elementz,' quod the Boke · 'her-of bereth witnesse.
 That he was god that al wrouzte · the walkene firste shewed;
 Tho that weren in heuene · token *stella comata*, 237
 And tendeden hir as a torche · to reuerence his birthe;
 The lyzte folwed the lorde · in-to the lowe erthe.
 The water witnessed that he was god · for he went on it; 240
 Peter the apostel · parceyued his gate,
 And as he went on the water · wel hym knewe, and seyde,
Iube me venire ad te super aquas.

The whiche vnknütteth alle care · and comsyng is of reste.
 For til moreyne mete with ous · ich may hit wel a-vowe,
 Ne wot no wight, as ich wene · what is ynowh to mene.

For-thi god of hus goodnesse · the furst man Adam, 228
 He sette hym in solace furst · and in souerayne murthe;
 And sutthe suffrede hym to synege · sorwe to fele,
 To wite ther-thorw what wele was · and kyndeliche to knowe.
 And after auntede god hym-self · and tok Adams kynde, 232
 To wite what he hadde suffred · in thre sondry places,
 Bothe in heuene and in erthe; · and now to helle he thenketh,
 To wite what alle wo is · that wot of alle ioye;

Omnia probate; quod bonum est tenete.

So shal hit fare by this folke · here folie and here synne 236
 Shal lere hem what loue is · and lisse with-uten ende.
 For wot no wight what werre is · ther as pees regneth,
 Ne what is witerliche wele · til wele-a-way hym teche.'

Thenne was ther a wight · with two brode eyen, 240
 Book hihte that beau-pere · a bold man of speche.
 'By godes body,' quath this Book · 'ich wole bere wyttnesse,
 Tho this barn was ybore · ther blased a sterre,
 That alle the wise of the worlde · in o wit a-cordede, 244
 That suche a barn was ybore · in Bethleem the cyte,
 That mannes soule sholde saue · and synne destruye.
 And alle the elemens,' quath the Book · 'here-of bereth witnesse.
 That he was god that al wrouhte · the wolkene furst shewede;
 Tho that weren in heuene · token *stella comata*,
 And tenden hit as a torche · to reuerence hus burthe; 250
 That light folwede the lorde · in-to the lowe erthe.
 The water witnessede that he was god · for he wente on hym drye;
 Peter the apostel · parceyuede hus gate,
 And as he wente vpon the water · wel hym knewe, and seide,
 Lord Crist, comaunde me · to come to the on watur; 255
 'Domine, iube me uenire ad te super aquas.'

C. 225. vnknüttip T; vnknütteth (sic) I; vnknüttete M; vnknütt EF; vnknütt P; vnknütt G; (perhaps vnknütt is best, but this is the contracted form of vnknütteth, so that it is much the same). 227. whight P. 228. goudnesse P. 231. white P. wat P. 232. tok MTG; touk P. 233. þre IFTG; þe PE. 239. is IMFTG; PE om. whiterliche P. 240. whight P. 242. þis EMFTG; þes P. 244. acordede FG; acorde P. 247. whitnesse P. 249. þo EIMTG; To P. 252. whitnesed P. (2na) he IMFT; god PEG. 255. This line is in F only. super aquas EMF; PIT om.

And lo! how the sonne gan louke · her lizte in her-self,
 Whan she seye hym suffre · that sonne and se made! 244
 The erthe for heuynesse · that he wolde suffre,
 Quaked as quykke thinge · and al biquashte the roche!
 Lo! helle mizte nouzte holde · but opened tho god tholed,
 And lete oute Symondes sones · to seen hym hange on rode.

And now shal Lucifer leue it · though hym loth thinke; 249
 For *Gygis* the geaunt · with a gynne engyned
 To breke and to bete doune · that ben azeines Iesus.

And I, Boke, wil be brent · but Iesus rise to lyue, 252
 In alle myztes of man · and his moder gladye,
 And conforte al his kynne · and out of care brynge,
 And al the Iuwen Ioye · vnioignen and vnlouken;
 And but thei reuerencen his rode · and his resurexioun, 256
 And bileue on a newe lawe · be lost lyf and soule.'

'Suffre we,' seide Treuth · 'I here and se bothe,
 How a spirit speketh to helle · and bit vnsperre the 3atis;
Attollite portas, etc.'

A voice loude in that lizte · to Lucifer cryeth, 260
 'Prynces of this place · vnpynneth and vnlouketh!
 For here cometh with croune · that kynge is of glorie.'
 Thanne syked Sathan · and seyde to hem alle,
 'Suche a lyzte, azeines owre leue · Lazar it fette; 264
 Care and combraunce · is comen to vs alle.
 If this kynge come in · mankynde wil he fecche,
 And lede it ther hym lyketh · and lyztlych me bynde.
 Patriarkes and prophetes · han parled her-of longe, 268
 That such a lorde and a lyzte · shulde lede hem alle hennes.'

Loo, how the sonne gan louke · hure light in huere-selue, 256
 When hue sey hym suffry deth · that sonne and seo made!
 Lo, the erthe for heuynesse · that he wolde deth suffre,
 Quakede as quike thyng · and al to-quashte the roches!
 Lo, helle myghte nat holde · bote openede, tho god deth tholedede,
 And let out Symondes sones · to se hym honge on rode, 261

Non uisurum se mortem.

Now shal Lucifer leyue hit · thauh hym loth thynke;
 For Iesus as a gyaunt · with a gyn cometh 3onde,
 To breken and to bete a-doun · alle that ben a-gayns hym, 264
 And to haue out alle · of hem that hym liketh.
 And 3ut ich, Book, wol beo brent · bote he arise to lyue,
 And conforten al hus kyn · and out of care brynge,
 And al the Iuwene Ioye · vnioynen, and vnlouken, 268
 And bote thei reuerencen hus resurexion · and the rode honoure,
 And by-leyue on a newe lawe · beo ylost lyf and soule!

‘Suffre we,’ saide Treuthe · ‘ich huyre and seo bothe
 A spirit speke to helle · and bit vnsperre the 3ates; 272

*Attollite portas, principes, vestras; et eleuamini, porte eter-
 nales, etc.’*

A voys loude in that light · to Lucifer seide,
 ‘Princes of this palys · prest vndo the 3ates,
 For here cometh with coroune · the kyng of alle glorie.’
 Thenne syhede Satan · and seide to helle, 276
 ‘Suche a light a-3eyns our leue · Lazar hit fette;
 Colde care and combraunce · is come to ous alle.
 Yf this kyng come yn · mankynde wol he fecche,
 And leden hit ther Lazar is · and lightliche me bynde. 280
 Patriarkes and prophetes · han parled her-of longe,
 That suche a lorde and a lyght · shal leden hem alle hennes.
 Ac rys vp Ragamoffyn · and reche me alle the barres
 That Belial thy bel-syre · beot with thy damme, 284
 And ich shal lette this lorde · and hus light stoppe;
 Ar we thorw bryghtnesse be blent · barre we the 3ates.

C. 257. he PELFTG; heo M; *read* hue. 259. Quakede MEIFTG;
 Quaquide P. to-quashte P. 262. lyue (*for* leyue) P. 263. 3onde MF;
 3ont T; 3eonde P. 268. vnloynen P. 269. PG *ins.* yf *after* bote.
 271. i MFT; we G; and PE; *read* ich. 279. 3es (*for* 3is) PG. come
 ITG; comeþ M; comen (*wrongly*) PF. 284. 3y EIMFTG; 3e P. bel
 IMG; beel PF.

‘Lysteneth,’ quod Lucifer · ‘for I this lorde knowe,
Bothe this lorde and this lizte; · is longe ago I knewe hym.
May no deth hym dere · ne no deueles queyntise, 272
And where he wil, is his waye; · ac war hym of the periles;
If he reue me my rizte · he robbeth me by maistrye.
For by rizt and bi resoun · tho renkes that ben here
Bode and soule ben myne · bothe gode and ille. 276
For hym-self seyde · that sire is of heuene,
ȝif Adam ete the apple · alle shuldē deye,
And dwelle with vs deueles · this thretynge he made;

And he that sothenesse is · seyde thise wordes; 280

And sitthen I seised · seuene hundreth wyntre,
I leue that lawe nil nauȝte · lete hym the leest.’

‘That is sothe,’ seyde Sathan · ‘but I me sore drede,
For thou gete hem with gyle · and his gardyne breke, 284

And in semblaunce of a serpent · sat on the appeltre,
And eggedest hem to ete · Eue by hir-selue,

Cheke we and cheyne we · and eche chyne stoppe,
 That no light leope yn · at loue ne at loupe. 288
 And thow, Astrot, hot out · and haue oute oure knaues,
 Coltyng and al hus kynne · oure catel to saue.
 Brynston boilaunt · brennyng out-casteth hit
 Al hot on here heuedes · that entren ny the walles. 292
 Setteth bowes of brake · and brasene gonnes,
 And sheteth out shot ynowh · hus shultrom to blende.
 Sette Mahon at the mangonel · and mulle-stones throweth,
 With crokes and with kalketrappes · a-cloye we hem echone!
 'Lusteneth,' quath Lucifer · 'for ich this lord knowe, 297
 Bothe this lord and this lyght · is longe gon ich knew hym.
 May no deth this lord dere · ne no deoueles queyntise,
 And wher he wole, is hus wey; · ac war hym of the periles;
 Yf he reue me of my ryght · he robbeth me by mastrie. 301
 For by ryght and reson · the renkes that beon here
 Body and soule beth myne · bothe good and ille.
 For he hym-self hit seide · that syre is of helle, 304
 That Adam and Eue · and al hus issue
 Sholden deye with deol · and here dwelle euere,
 Yf that thei touchede a treo · other toke ther-of an appel.
 Thus this lorde of light · suche a lawe made, 308
 And sitthe he is so leel a lorde · ich leyue that he wol nat
 Reuen ous of oure ryght · sutthe reson hem dampned
 And sutthe we han beo sesed · seuene thowsend wynter,
 And neuere was ther-azeyn · and now wolde by-gynne, 312
 He were vnwrast of hus worde · that witnesse is of trewthe.'
 'That is soth,' seide Satan · 'bote ich me sore doute,
 For thow gete hem with gyle · and hus gardyn breke,
 A-geyn hus loue and hus leue · on hus londe 3eodest, 316
 Nat in forme of a feonde · bote in forme of an addre,
 And entisedest Eue · to ete by heore on,

Ve soli!

And by-hihtest heore and hym · after to knowe,
 As two godes, with god · bothe good and ille; 320
 Thus with treison and with trecherie · thow troiledest hem bothe,

C. 288. leopen P. 289. oure IFTG; PE *om.* 292. on MFTG; in PE.
 293. and EIMFTG; a P. 297. Lusteneþ M; Lustneþ G; Lusteth PE.
 307. þat IMET; PFG *om.* 308. thees (*for this*) P. 313. treweþe P.
 320. two ET; to PMFIG.

And toldest hir a tale · of tresoun were the wordes;
 And so thow haddest hem oute · and hider atte laste. 288
 It is nouȝte graythely geten · there gyle is the rote.
 'For god wil nouȝt be bigiled' · quod Gobelyn, 'ne bi-iaped;
 We haue no trewe title to hem · for thorwgh tresoun were thei
 dampned.' 291
 'Certes, I drede me,' quod the deuel · 'leste treuth wil hem fecche.

This thretty wynter, as I wene · hath he gone and preched;
 I haue assailed hym with synne · and some tyme yasked
 Where he were god or goddes sone? · he gaf me shorte answere.
 And thus hath he trolled forth · this two and thretty wynter,

And whan I seighe it was so · slepyng, I went 297
 To warne Pilates wyf · what dones man was Iesus;
 For Iuwes hateden hym · and han done hym to deth.
 I wolde haue lengthed his lyf · for I leued, ȝif he deyede, 300
 That his soule wolde suffre · no synne in his syȝte.
 For the body, whil it on bones ȝede · aboute was euere
 To saue men fram synne · ȝif hem-self wolde.

And now I se where a soule · cometh hiderward seylynge 304
 With glorie and with grete lizte · god it is, I wote wel.
 I rede we flee,' quod he · 'faste alle hennes;
 For vs were better nouȝte be · than biden his syȝte.
 For thi lesynges, Lucifer · loste is al owre praye. 308
 Firste thorw the we fellen · fro heuene so heighe;
 For we leued thi lesynges · we loupn oute alle with the,
 And now for thi last lesynge · ylore we haue Adam,
 And al owre lordeship, I leue · a londe and a water; 312
Nunc princeps huius mundi eicietur foras.'

And dudest hem breke here buxomnesse · thorw false by-hestē;
Thus haddest thou hem oute · and hyder atte laste.

Hit is nat greythly getyn · ther gyle is the rote.' 324

'And god wol nat be by-gyled' · quath Gobelyn, 'ne by-laped;
We haue no trewe title to hem · for thi treison hit maketh.'

'For-thi ich drede me,' quath the deouel · 'lest treuthe wol hem
fecche.

And as thow by-gyledest godes ymage · in goynge of an addre,
So hath god by-gyled ous alle · in goynge of a wye.' 329

'For god hath go,' quath Gobelyn · 'in a gome lyknesse
This thritty wynter, as ich wene · and went a-bowte and pre-
chede. 331

Ich haue asailid hym with synne · and som tyme ich askede
Wher he were god other godes sone? · he gaf me short answer.

Thus hath he troiled · and trauailed in hus tyme

Forth like a tydy man · this two and thritty wyntere,

And whenne ich seih that hit was so · ich sotelide how ich
myghte 336

Lette hem that louede hym nat · lest thei wolde hym martrye.

Ich wolde haue lengthed hus lyf · for ich leyuede, yf he deyede,
And hus soule huder come · he sholde shende ous alle.

The body, whyle hit on bones ȝede · a-boute was hit euere 340
To lere men to beo leel · eche man to louen other;

The whiche lif and lawe · be hit longe y-used,

Hit shal vndon ous deoueles · and down brynge ous alle.'

'Now y seo wher hus soule · cometh seilinge hiderwardes 344

With glorie and with gret light · god hit is, ich wot wel.

Ich rede we fleo,' quath the feond · 'faste alle hennes;

For us were betere nat beo · than abyde in hus syghte.

For thi lesynges, Lucifer · we loste furst our Ioye, 348

And out of heuene hider · thi prude made ous falle;

For we leyuede on thy lesynges · ther losten we oure blysse.

And now, for a later lesynge · that thow lowe tyl Eue,

We han lost oure lordshap · a londe and in belle; 352

Nunc princeps huius mundi eicietur foras.'

C. 322. he (*for* here) P. 326. triwe P. 335. two EFT; to PMG.
336. hit MEG; it IFT; he P. 340. wyle P. ȝeden P. 342. yusede P.
343. don (*for* doun) P. 346. wey (*for* we) P. 347. hus (*for* us) P. 348.
lesynges IMFT; lesynge PEG; *see* l. 350. 350. lyuede P; *see* l. 338. oure
FTG; PE *om.*; *see* l. 348. 352. Whe (*for* We) P. lordshap P. *eicietur*
foras in M only.

Efte the lizte bad vnlouke · and Lucifer answered,
 ‘What lorde artow?’ quod Lucifer · ‘*quis est iste?*’
 ‘*Rex glorie*’ · the lizte sone seide,
 ‘And lorde of myzte and of mayne · and al manere vertues;
 dominus virtutum; 316
 Dukes of this dym place · anon vndo this zates,
 That Cryst may come in · the kynges sone of heuene.’
 And with that breth helle brake · with Beliales barres;
 For any wye or warde · wide opene the zatis. 320
 Patriarkes and prophetes · *populus in tenebris*,
 Songen seyn: Iohanes songe · ‘*ecce agnus dei.*’
 Lucyfer loke ne myzte · so lyzte hym ableynte;
 And tho that owre lorde loued · in-to his lizte he lauhte, 324
 And seyde to Sathan, ‘lo! here · my soule to amendes
 For alle synneful soules · to saue tho that ben worthy.
 Myne thei be and of me · I may the bette hem clayme.
 Al-though resoun recorde · and rize of my-self, 328
 That if thei ete the apple · alle shulde deye,
 I bihyzte hem nouzt here · helle for euere.
 For the dede that thei dede · thi deceyte it made;
 With gyle thow hem gete · agayne al resoun. 332
 For in my paleys, paradys · in persone of an addre,
 Falseliche thow fettest there · thyng that I loued.
 Thus ylyke a lusarde · with a lady visage,
 Theuelich thow me robbedest; · the olde lawe graunteth, 336
 That gylours be bigiled · and that is gode resoun;

Suththe that Satan · myssayde thus foule
 Lucifer for hus lesynges · leyue ich non other,
 Bote oure lord atte laste · lyeres here rebuke, 355
 And wyte hem al the wrecchednesse · that wrouht is on erthe.
 Beo yware, 3e wise clerkes · and wytty men of lawe,
 That 3e be-lei3e nat these lewed men · for atte laste .Dauid
 Witnesseth in hus wrytynge · what is lyeres mede;

*Odisti omnes qui operantur iniquitatem, et perdes omnes qui
 .loquntur mendacium.*

A lytel ich ouer-lep · for lesynges sake, 360
 That ich ne segge as ich seih · suyng my teme!—

For eft that light bad vnlouke · and Lucifer answerede,
 ‘What lord art thou?’ quath Lucifer; · a voys a-loud seyde,
 ‘The lord of myght and of mayn · that made alle thynges. 364
 Duke of this dymme place · a-non vndo the 3ates,
 That Crist mowe comen in · the kynges sone of heuene.’
 And with that breth helle brake · with alle Beliales barres;
 For eny wye other warde · wyde openede the gates. 368

Patriarkes and prophetes · *populus in tenebris*,
 Songen with seint Iohan · ‘*ecce agnus dei!*’
 Lucifer loke ne myghte · so lyght him a-blente;
 And tho that oure lord louede · with that lyght forth flowen. 372
 ‘Lo, me her,’ quath oure lorde · ‘lyf and soule bothe,
 For alle synful soules · to saue oure beyere ryght.
 Myne thei were and of me · ich may the beter hem cleyme.
 Al-thauh reson recorde · and ryght of my-selue, 376
 That yf thei eten the appel · alle sholden deye,
 Ich by-hihte hem nat here · helle for euere.

For the dedliche synne that thei duden · thi deceite hit made;
 With gyle thow hem gete · ageyn alle reson. 380
 For in my paleis paradis · in persone of an addere,
 Falsliche thou fettest there · that me by-fel to loke,
 By-glosedest hem and bygyledest hem · and my gardyn breke,
 A-3eyns my loue and my leyue; · the olde lawe techeth, 384
 That gylours be by-gylid · and in here gyle falle.

C. 356. wyten P. 358. be-lei3e T; by-gylie PE; bi-gile MG. þeos P.
 P om. lewed. 359. Whitnesseþ P. 363. art IMFT; ert PEG. 364.
 mayn MFTG; mayne IE; man P. 375. þei (for þe) P. 382. þou FG;
 Pemit om. 383. bygyledest G; bigilidest MIFT; gyledest PE. 385.
 be EFTG; ben M; beþ P.

Dentem pro dente, et oculum pro oculo.

Ergo, soule shal soule quyte · and synne to synne wende,
 And al that man hath mysdo · I, man, wyl amende.
 Membre for membre · bi the olde lawe was amendes, 340
 And lyf for lyf also · and by that lawe I clayme it,
 Adam and al his issue · at my wille her-after.
 And that deth in hem fordid · my deth shal releue,
 And bothe quykke and quyte · that queynte was thorw synne;
 And that grace gyle destruye · good feith it asketh. 345
 So leue it nouzte, Lucifer · azeine the lawe I fecche hem,
 But bi riȝt and by resoun · raunceoun here my lyges :

Non veni soluere legem, sed adimplere.

Thow fettest myne in my place · azeines al resoun, 348
 Falseliche and felounelich; · gode faith me it tauzte,
 To recoure hem thorw raunceoun · and bi no resoun elles,
 So that with gyle thow gete · thorw grace it is ywone.
 Thow, Lucyfer, in lyknesse · of a luther addere, 352
 Getest by gyle · tho that god loued;
 And I, in lyknesse of a leode · that lorde am of heuene,
 Graciousliche thi gyle haue quytte · go gyle azeine gyle!
 And as Adam and alle · thorw a tre deyden, 356
 Adam and alle thorwe a tree · shal torne azeine to lyue;
 And gyle is bigyled · and in his gyle fallen :

Et cecidit in foueam quam fecit.

Now bygynneth thi gyle · ageyne the to tourne,
 And my grace to growe · ay gretter and wyder. 360
 The bitternesse that thow hast browe · brouke it thi-seluen,
 That art doctour of deth · drynke that thow madest!

For I, that am lorde of lyf · loue is my drynke,
 And for that drynke to-day · I deyde vpon erthe. 364
 I fauȝte so, me threstes ȝet · for mannes soule sake;
 May no drynke me moiste · ne my thruste slake,
 Tyl the vendage falle · in the vale of Iosephath,
 That I drynke riȝte ripe must · *resureccio mortuorum*, 368
 And thanne shal I come as a kynge · crouned with angeles,
 And han out of helle · alle mennes soules.

Fendes and fendekynes · bifor me shulle stande,

And ho so hitteth out a mannes eye · other elles hus for-teth,
 Othere eny manere membre · maymeth other hurteth,
 The same sore shal he haue · that enye so smyteth ; 388

Dentem pro dente, et oculum pro oculo.

So lyf shal lyf lete · ther lyf hath lyf anyented,
 So that lyf quyte lyf · the olde lawe hit asketh.
Ergo, soule shal soule quyte · and synne to synne wende,
 And al that man mys-dude · ich, man, to amenden hit ; 392
 And that that deth for-dude · my deth to releuen,
 Bothe aquyte and aquykye · that was aqueynt thorw synne ;
 And gyle be by-gyled · thorgh grace atte laste,

Ars ut artem falleret, etc.

So leyf hit nat, Lucifer · that ich a-zeyns the lawe 396
 Fecche here eny synful soule · souereynliche by maistrie ;
 Bot thorgh ryght and reson · raunson here myne lige ;

Non ueni soluere legem, sed adimplere.

So that thorgh gyle was geten · thorwe grace is now y-wonne.
 And as Adam and alle · thorw a treo deyden, 400
 Adam and alle thorgh a treo · shal turne to lyue.
 And now by-gynneth thi gyle · a-gayn on the turne,
 And my grace to growe · ay wydder and wydder.
 The biternesse that thow hast browe · now brouk hit thyself ; 404
 That art doctour of deth · drynk that thow madest !

For ich that am lord of lyf · loue is my drynke,
 And for that drynke to-daye · deyede, as hit semede ;
 Ac ich wol drynke of no dich · ne of no deop cleregie, 408
 Bote of comune coppes · alle Cristene soules ;
 Ac thi drynke worth deth · and deop helle thy bolle.
 Ich fauht so, me fursteth ȝut · for mannes soule sake ;

Sicio.

May no pyement ne pomade · ne presiousse drynkes 412
 Moyste me to the fulle · ne my thurst slake,
 Til the vendage valle · in the vale of Iosaphat,
 And drynke ryght rype most · *resurreccio mortuorum*.
 Then shal ich come as a kyng · with coroune and with angeles,
 And haue out of helle · alle menne soules. 417
 Feondes and feondekenes · by-for me shullen stande,

C. 388. sore EIF ; sor MT ; for P. 389. P *em.* 2nd lyf. 393. my ITG ;
 ich PE. 405. art IMFT ; ert PEG. 414. valle P ; falle EIMFTG.

And be at my biddynge · where so cure me lyketh. 372

And to be merciablen to man · thanne my kynde it asketh ;

For we beth bretheren of blode · but nouȝte in baptesme alle.

Ac alle that beth myne hole bretheren · in blode and in baptesme,
Shal nouȝte be dampned to the deth · that is with-outen ende ;

Tibi soli peccavi, etc.

It is nouȝt vsed in erthe · to hangen a feloun 377

Ofter than ones · though he were a tretour.

And ȝif the kyng of that kyngedome · come in that tyme,

There the feloun thole sholde · deth or otherwyse, 380

Lawe wolde, he ȝeue hym lyf · if he loked on hym.

And I, that am kyng of kynges · shal come suche a tyme,

There dome to the deth · dampneth al wikked ;

And ȝif lawe wil I loken on hem · it lithe in my grace, 384

Whether thei deye or deye nouȝte · for that thei deden ille.

Be it any thinge about · the boldenesse of her synnes,

I may do mercy thorw riȝtwisnesse · and alle my wordes trewe.

And though holiwrit wil that I be wroke · of hem that deden ille.

Nullum malum impunitum, etc.,

Thei shul be clensed clereliche · and wasshen of her synnes 389

In my prisoun purgatorie · til *parce* it hote,

And my mercy shal be shewed · to manye of my bretheren.

For blode may suffre blode · bothe hungry and akale, 392

Ac blode may nouȝt se blode · blede, but hym rewe.—

Audiui archana verba, que non licet homini loqui.—

‘Ac my riȝtwisnesse and riȝt · shal reulen al helle,

And mercy al mankynde · bifor me in heuene.

For I were an vnkynde kyng · but I my kynde holpe, 396

And namelich at such a nede · ther nedes helpe bihoueth ;

Non intres in iudicium cum seruo tuo, domine.

‘Thus bi lawe,’ quod owre lorde · ‘lede I wil fro hennes

‘Tho that me loued · and leued in my comynge.

And for thi lesynge, Lucifer · that thow lowe til Eue, 400

And be at my byddyng · at blysse other at peyne.
 Ac to beo merciabie to man · thenne my kynde asketh; 420
 For we beoth bretheren of blod · ac nat in baptisme alle.
 Ac alle that beoth myn half-bretheren · in blod and in baptisme
 Shal neuere eft in helle come · beo he ones oute;

Tibi soli peccaui, et malum contra te feci, etc.

Hit is nat vsed on erthe · to honge eny felones 424
 Ofter than ones · thauh thei weren treitours.
 And yf the kyng of the kyngdom · come in the tyme
 Ther a theof tholy sholde · deth other Iuwise,
 Lawe wolde he ȝeue hym lyf · and he lokede on hym. 428
 And ich, that am kynge ouer kynges · shal come suche a tyme,
 Ther that dom to the deoth · dampneth alle wyckede;
 And yf lawe wol ich loken on hem · hit lyth in my grace,
 Whether thei deye other deye nat · dude thei neuere so ille. 432
 Be hit eny thyng dere about · the boldness of here synne,
 Ich may do mercy of my ryghtwisnesse · and alle myne wordes
 trewe.

For holy writ wole that ich be awreke · of hem that wrouhte ille;

As, nullum malum impunitum, et nullum bonum irremuneratum.

And so of alle wyckede · ich wolle here take veniaunce, 436
 And ȝut my kynde, in my kene yre · shal contrarie my wil—

Domine, ne in furore tuo arguas me, neque in ira tua corripias me—

To beo merciabie to menye · of my half-bretheren.
 For blod may seo blood · bothe a-thurst and a-cale,
 Ac blod may nat seo blod · blede, bote hym rewe.'— 440

Audiui archana verba, que non licet homini loqui.—

'Ac my ryghtwisnesse and my right · shal regnen in helle,
 And mercy and mankynde · by-for me in heuene.
 For ich were an vnkynde kynge · bote ich my kyn holpe,
 And nameliche at suche a neode · that neodes help asketh; 444

Non intres in iudicium cum servo tuo, domine.

Thus by lawe, quath oure lord · 'lede ich wol fro hennes
 Alle that ich louye · and leyuede in my comynge.
 Ac for the lesynge that thow, Lucifer · lowe til Eue,

C. 421. broþerne P (*and in l. 422*). 427. Iuwise EM; iewise IG; Iuwes P.
 429. a kynge P; EIMFTG *omit a.* PE *om. a.* 430. dampned P. 433.
 dere about MFE; dure y-bouht P. 434. trywe P. 438. broþerne P.
 443. holpe EIMFT; helpe P.

Thow that abowt it hitte — - and bonde hym with cheynes.

Asaured and at the roote · hidden hem in hermes,
 They forseunge nonge like on owre lorde · the boldest of hem alle,
 But leue hym like fori what hym hyed · and lete what hym
 lene. 404

Many hundredth of angies · harpeden and songen,
Calpet car, purget car; regnat deus dei car.

Thanne piped pees · of poynte a note,
 ‘*Clarior est solis post maxime nebule phalar,*
Post inimicitias clarior est et amor.’ 408

After sharpe shoures,’ quod Pees · ‘moste shene is the sonne;
 Is no weder warmer · than after watery cloudes.
 Ne no loue leuere · ne leuer frendes,
 Than after werre and wo · whan Loue and Pees be maistres. 412

Was neuere werre in this worlde · ne wykkednesse so kene,
 That ne Loue, and hym luste · to laughynge ne brougte,
 And Pees thow patience · alle perilles stopped.’
 ‘Trewes,’ quod Treuth · ‘thow tellest vs soth, bi Iesus! 416
 Clippe we in couenaunt · and vch of vs cusse other!’
 ‘And lete no peple,’ quod Pees · ‘perceyue that we chydde!
 For impossible is no thyng · to hym that is almyty.’
 ‘Thow seist soth,’ seyde Rytwisnesse · and reuerentlich hir
 kyste, 420

Pees, and Pees here · *per secula seculorum.*

*Misericordia et veritas obuiauerunt sibi; iusticia et pax
 osculate sunt.*

Treuth tromped tho, and songe · ‘*Te deum laudamus*’;
 And thanne luted Loue · in a loude note,
Ecce quam bonum et quam iocundum, etc.

Tyl the daye dawed · this damaiseles daunced, 424
 That men rongen to the resurexioun · and ryzt with that I waked,
 And called Kitte my wyf · and Kalote my douzter—
 ‘Ariseth and reuerenceth · goddes resurrexioun,
 And crepeth to the crosse on knees · and kisseth it for a Iuwel!

Thow shalt abygge bitere,' quath god · and bond hym with
cheynes. 448

Astrot and alle othere · hudden hem in heornes,
Thei dorst nat loken on oure lorde · the leste of hem alle,
Bote leten hym leden forth which hym luste · and leue whiche
hym lykede.

Mony hundrede of aungelis · harpeden tho and songen, 452
Culpat caro, purgat caro, regnat deus dei caro.

Thenne pipede Pees · of poetes a note,
'*Clarior est solito · post maxima nebula phebuis ;*
Post inimicitias · clarior est et amor.

After sharpest shoures,' quath Pees · 'most sheene is the sonne ;
Ys no weder warmer · than after watery cloudes, 457
Nother loue leuere · ne leuere freondes,
Than after werre and wrake · whanne loue and pees beon
maistres.

Was neuere werre in this worlde · ne wykkeder enuye, 460
That Loue, and hym luste · to lauhynge ne brouhte,
And Pees thorgh pacience · alle pereles stoppede.'
'Treuwes,' quath Treuthe · 'thou tellest soth, by Iesus!
Cluppe we in couenaunt · and ech of ous cusse other !' 464
'And leet no people,' quath Pees · 'parceyue that we chide!
For impossible is no thyng · to hym that is al-mygthy.'
'Thow seist soth,' quath Ryghtwisnesse · and reuerentliche heo
custe

Pees, and Pees heore · *per secula seculorum.* 468
Misericordia et ueritas obuiauuerunt sibi ; iusticia et pax
osculate sunt.

Treuthe trompede tho, and song · '*Te deum laudamus ;*'
And then lutede Loue · in a lowd note,
'*Ecce quam bonum et quam iocundum est habitare fratres*
in unum !'

Tyl the day dawede · these damseles daunsede,
That men rang to the resurreccioun · and with that ich awakede,
And kallyd Kytte my wyf · and Kalote my doughter, 473
'A-rys, and go reuerence · godes resurreccioun,
And creop on kneos to the croys · and cusse hit for a Iuwel,

C. 449. Astrott P. 451. leten IE ; leet F ; let TG ; leot P. 461. ne
EFT ; PMI om. 462. *From* ITG ; PEMF *omit this line.*

For goddes blissed body · it bar for owre bote,
 And it afereth the fende · for suche is the myzte,
 May no grysly gost · glyde there it shadweth !'

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PASSUS XIX.

Passus xix^m ; et explicit Dobet ; et incipit Dobest.

THUS I awaked and wrote · what I had dremed,
 And dizte me derely · and dede me to cherche,
 To here holy the masse · and to be houseled after.
 In myddes of the masse · tho men ȝede to offrynge, 4
 I fel eftsones a-slepe · and sodeynly me mette,
 That Pieres the Plowman · was paynted al blody,
 And come in with a crosse · bifor the comune peple,
 And rizte lyke in alle lymes · to owre lorde Iesu; 8
 And thanne called I Conscience · to kenne me the sothe.
 'Is this Iesus the Iuster?' quod I · 'that Iuwes did to deth?
 Or it is Pieres the Plowman! · who paynted hym so rede?'
 Quod Conscience, and kneled tho · 'thise aren Pieres armes, 12
 His coloures and his cote-armure · ac he that cometh so blody
 Is Cryst with his crosse · conqueroure of Crystene.'
 'Why calle ȝe hym Cryst?' quod I · 'sithenes Iuwes calle
 hym Iesus?
 Patriarkes and prophetes · prophecyyed bifore, 16
 That alkyn creatures · shulden knelen and bowen,
 Anon as men nempned · the name of god Iesu.
Ergo is no name · to the name of Iesus,
 Ne none so nedeful to nempne · by nyzte ne by daye. 20
 For alle derke deuilles · aren adradde to heren it,
 And synful aren solaced · and saued bi that name.
 And ȝe callen hym Cryst · for what cause, telleth me?

And ryghtfullokest a^relyk · non riccher on erthe. 476
 For godes blesside body · hit bar for oure bote,
 And hit a-fereth the feonde · for such is the myghte,
 May no grysliche gost · glyde ther hit shadeweth! 479

Hic explicit passus quartus et ultimus de Dobet.

PASSUS XXII.

Hic incipit passus primus de Dobet.

THUS ich awakede and wrot · what ich hadde dremed,
 And dyhte me derly · and dude me to churche,
 To huyre holliche the masse · and be housled after.
 In myddes of the masse · tho men ȝeden to offrynge, 4
 Ich fel est-sones a-slepe · and sodeynliche me mette,
 That Peers the Plouhman · was peynted al bloody,
 And cam yn with a croys · by-fore the comune people,
 And ryght like in alle lymes · to oure lord Iesu; 8
 And thenne calde ich Conscience · to kenne me the sothe.
 ‘Is this Iesus the Iouster?’ quath ich · ‘that Iuwes duden to
 dethe,
 Other is hit Peers Plouhman? · ho peynted hym so rede?’ 11
 Quath Conscience, and kneolede tho · ‘these aren Cristes armes,
 Hus colours and hus cote-armure · and he that cometh so bloody,
 Hit is Crist with his crois · conquerour of Crystine.’
 ‘Whi calle ȝe him Crist · siththen Iuwes cald hym Iesus?
 Patriarkes and prophetes · propheciede by-fore, 16
 That alle kynne creatures · sholden kneolen and bowen,
 A-non as men nempned · the name of god Iesu.
Ergo is no name · to the name of Iesu,
 Ne non so neodful to nempne · by nyghte ne by daye. 20
 For alle deorke deoueles · dreden hit to huyre,
 And synful ben solacede · and saued by that name.
 And ȝe callen hym Crist · for what cause, telleth me?

C. 476. An (*for* And) P.

Passus XXII. 5. fel GT; ful M; felle EIS; feel P. 12. this (*for* these) P.
 14. is (*for* his) P. 15. PE *ins.* þat *after* siþthen. 20. Ne IFGT; And
 PEM.

Is Cryst more of myzte · and more worthy name 24
 Than Iesu or Iesus · that al owre Ioye come of?'

‘Thow knowest wel,’ quod Conscience · ‘and thow konne
 resoun,

That knyzte, kynge, conqueroure · may be o persone.
 To be called a knizte is faire · for men shal knele to hym; 28
 To be called a kynge is fairer · for he may knyztēs make;
 Ac to be conquerour called · that cometh of special grace,
 And of hardynesse of herte · and of hendenesse bothe,
 To make lordes of laddes · of londe that he wynneth, 32
 And fre men foule thralles · that folweth nouȝt his lawes.
 The Iuwes, that were gentil-men · Iesu thei dispised,
 Bothe his lore and his lawe · now ar thei lowe cherlis.
 As wyde as the worlde is · wonyeth there none 36
 But vnder tribut and taillage · as tykes and cherles.
 And tho that bicomē Crysten · by conseilē of the baptiste,
 Aren frankeleynes, fre men · thorw fullyng that thei toke,
 And gentel-men with Iesu · for Iesus was yfulled, 40
 And vppon Caluarye on crosse · ycrouned kynge of Iewes.

It bicometh to a kynge · to kepe and to defende,
 And conquerour of conquest · his lawes and his large.
 And so dide Iesus the Iewes · he Iustified and tauȝte hem 44
 The lawe of lyf · that last shal euere;
 And fended fram foule yueles · feueres and fluxes,
 And fro fendes that in hem were · and fals bileue.
 Tho was he Iesus of Iewes called · gentel prophete, 48
 And kynge of her kyngdome · and croune bar of thornes.
 And tho conquered he on crosse · as conquerour noble;
 Myzt no deth hym fordo · ne adown brynge,
 That he ne aros and regned · and rauysshed helle. 52
 And tho was he ‘conquerour’ called · of quikke and of ded;
 For he ȝaf Adam and Eue · and other mo blisse,
 That longe hadde leyne bifore · as Lucyferes cherles.

And sith he ȝaf largely · alle his lele lyges 56

B. 40. yfulled WCY; yfolled L. 44. dide WCOBY; ded L. 47. were WCBY; was L.

Is Crist more of myght · and more worthiere name 24
 Than Iesu other Iesus · that al oure Ioy come of?
 ‘Thow knowest wel,’ quath Conscience · ‘and thow conne reson,
 That knyght, kyng, conquerour · may be o persone.
 To be cald a knyght is fair · for men shal to hym kneole; 28
 To be cald a kyng is fairour · for he may knyghtes make;
 And to be cald conquerour · that cometh of special grace,
 Of hardynesse of heorte · and of hendeness bothe,
 To make lordes of laddes · of londe that he wynneth, 32
 And fre men foule thralles · that folwen nat hus lawes.
 The Iuwes that weren gentel-men · Iesu thei dispiseden,
 Bothe hus lore and hus lawe · now aren thei lowe cheorles.
 As wide as the worlde is · wonyeth ther none 36
 Bote vnder tribut and taillage · as tikes and cheorles.
 And tho that by-comen Cristine · by consail of the baptist,
 Aren frankelayns and freo · thorgh fullyng that thei toke,
 And gentel-men with Iesu · for Iesus was yfulled, 40
 And vp-on Caluarie on croys · y-crowned kyng of Iuwes.
 Hit by-cometh for a kyng · to kepen and defende,
 And conquerour of hus conqueste · hus laies and hus large.
 So dude Iesus the Iuwes · he Iustifiede and tauhte hem 44
 The lawe of the lykyng lyf · that laste shal euere;
 And fendede hem fro foule vueles · feueres and fluxes,
 And fro feondes that were in hem · and false by-leyue.
 Tho was he Iesus of Iuwes cald · gentel prophete, 48
 And kyng of here kyngdom · and corone bar of thornes.
 And tho conquered he on croys · as conquerour noble;
 Myght no deth hym for-do · ne adoun brynge,
 That he ne aros and regnede · and rauesshede helle; 52
 And tho was he ‘conquerour’ called · of quyke and of dede.
 For he ȝaf Adam and Eue · and other mo blisse,
 That longe hadde leye by-fore · as Luciferes cheorles;
 And tok Lucifer the lothliche · that lorde was of helle, 56
 And bond hym as he is bounde · with bondes of yren.
 Ho was hardier than he? · hus heorte blode he shadde,
 To maken alle folk freo · that folwen hus lawe.
 And sutthe he ȝaf largeliche · all hus leel lege 60

C. 31. boȝe T; *which* PEMFG *omit*. 41. on MIF; with PET. y-crowned IF; crowned EMT; coronede P. 44. Iustefiede P. 60. ȝaf EFG; ȝaue P; see L 54.

Places in paradys · at her partynge hennes,
 He may wel be called 'conquerour' · and that is Cryst to mene.
 Ac the cause that he cometh thus · with crosse of his passioun,
 Is to wissen vs there-wyth · that whan that we ben tempted, 60
 Ther-with to fyzte and fenden vs · fro fallyng in-to synne,
 And se bi his sorwe · that who so loueth Ioye,
 To penaunce and to pouerte · he moste putten hym-seluen,
 And moche wo in this worlde · willen and suffren. 64

Ac to carpe more of Cryst · and how he come to that name,
 Faithly forto speke · his firste name was Iesus.
 Tho he was borne in Bethleem · as the boke telleth,
 And cam to take mankynde · kynges and aungeles 68
 Reuerenced hym faire · with richesse of erthe.
 Angeles out of heuene · come knelyng and songe,

Gloria in excelsis deo, etc.

Kynges come after · kneled, and offred
 Mirre and moche golde · with-uten mercy askyng, 72
 Or any kynnes catel · but knowlechyng hym soeueraigne
 Bothe of sonde, sonne, and see · and sithenes thei went
 In-to her kyngene kyth · by conseil of angeles.
 And there was that worde fulfilled · the which thou of speke ; 76

Omnia celestia, terrestria, flectantur in hoc nomine Iesu.

For alle the angeles of heuene · at his burth kneled,
 And al the witte of the worlde · was in tho thre kynges ;
 Resoun and riztwisnesse · and reuth thei offred ;
 Wherefore and whi · wyse men that tyme, 80
 Maistres and lettred men · *Magy* hem called.
 That o kynge cam with resoun · keuered vnder sense.
 The secounde kynge sitthe · sothliche offred
 Riztwisnesse vnder red golde · resouns felawe. 84
 Golde is likned to leute · that last shal euere,
 And resoun to riche golde · to rizte and to treuthe.
 The thridde kynge tho cam · knelyng to Iesu,
 And presented hym with pitee · apierynge by myrre ; 88
 For mirre is mercy to mene · and mylde speche of tonge.
 Thre yliche honest thinges · was offred thus at ones,
 Thorw thre kynne kynges · knelynge to Iesu.

B. 79. riztwisnesse WOY ; riztfulnesse LCB ; see l. 84. 90. was L ; were WOY.

Places in paradis · at here partyng hennes,
 He may beo wel cald 'conquerour' · and that is Crist to mene.
 Ac the cause whi he cometh thus · with croys and hus passion,
 Ys, to wissen ous ther-wið · that when we beo tempted, 64
 Ther-wið to fighten and fenden ous · fro fallyng in-to synne,
 And seo by hus sorwe · that ho so loueth Ioye,
 To penaunce and to pouerte · he mot putte hym-selue,
 And mucche wo in this worlde · wilnen and suffren. 68

Ac to carpe more of Crist · and how he cam to that name,
 Faithly for to speke · hus furste name was Iesus.
 Tho he was bore in Bethleem · as the book telleth,
 And cam to take mankynde · kynges and aungeles 72
 Reuerencede hym ryght faire · with richesse of eorthe.
 Aungeles of heuene comen · kneolede and songen,

Gloria in excelsis deo.

Kynges comen after · kneolede and offride
 Mucche gold and murre · with-oute mercy askynge, 76
 Other eny kynne catel · bote knewelechede hym souereyn
 Bothe of sand, sonne, and see · and sitthen thei wente
 In-to here kyngene kutthe · by counsail of aungeles,
 And ther was that word fulfild · the which thou of speke; 80

Omnia celestia, terrestria, flectantur in hoc nomine Iesu.

For alle the aungeles of heuene · at hus burthe kneolede,
 And al the wit of the worlde · was in tho thre kynges;
 Reson and ryghtwisnesse · and reuthe thei offrede;
 Where-fore and whi · wise men that tyme, 84
 Maistres and lettred men · *Magi* hem calde.

That on kyng cam with reson · ycouerid vnder sense;
 The secounde kyng sitthen · sothliche he offrede
 Ryghtwisnesse, vnder red gold · resones felawe. 88

Gold is likned to leaute · that laste shal euere,
 And reson to ryche gold · to right and to treuthe.
 The thridde kyng cam tho · and kneolede to Iesu,
 And presentide hym with pite · aperyng by mirre; 92
 For mirre is mercy to mene · and mylde speche of tonge.
 Eorthliche honeste thynges · was offred thus at ones
 Thorgh thre kynde kynges · kneolyng to Iesu.

C. 73. Reuerencide P. 77. knewelichede P. 82. (1st) þe EMFGT; þat P.
 83. ryghtwisnesse EMF; ryghtfulnesse PGT; see l. 88. 84. Werefore P.
 89. licknede P.

Ac for alle thise preciouſe presentz · owre lorde prynce Iesus 92
 Was neyther kynge ne conquerour · til he gan to wexe
 In the manere of a man · and that by moche sleight;
 As it bicometh a conquerour · to konne many sleightes,
 And many wyles and witte · that wil ben a leder; 96
 And so did Iesu in his dayes · who so had tyme to telle it.
 Sum tyme he suffred · and sum tyme he hydde hym;
 And sum tyme he fauhte faste · and fleigh otherwhile.
 And some tyme he gaf good · and graunted hele bothe, 100
 Lyf and lyme · as hym lyst, he wrought.
 As kynde is of a conquerour · so comsed Iesu,
 Tyl he had alle hem · that he for bledde.
 In his Iuente this Iesus · atte Iuwen feste 104
 Water in-to wyn tourned · as holy writ telleth,
 And there bigan god · of his grace to Dowel.
 For wyn is lykned to lawe · and lyf of holynesse;
 And lawe lakked tho · for men loued nouȝt her enemys. 108
 And Cryst conseillesh thus · and comaundeth bothe,
 Bothe to lered and to lewed · to louye owre enemys.
 So atte feste firste · as I bifore tolde,
 Bygan god, of his grace · and goodnesse, to Dowel: 112
 And tho was he cleped and called · nouȝt holy Cryst, but Iesu,
 A faunt fyn, ful of witte · *filius Marie*.
 For bifor his moder Marie · made he that wonder,
 That she furste and formest · ferme shulde bilieue, 116
 That he thorw grace was gete · and of no gome elles.
 He wrouȝt that bi no witte · but thorw worde one,
 After the kynde that he come of · there comsed he Dowel.
 And whan he was woxen more · in his moder absence, 120
 He made lame to lepe · and ȝaue lizte to blynde,
 And fedde with two fisshes · and with fyue loues
 Sore afyngred folke · mo than fyue thousande.
 Thus he confortd carful · and cauȝte a gretter name, 124
 The whiche was Dobet · where that he went.
 For dese thorw his doyngeſ to here · and dombe speke he made,

Ac for alle thes preciose presentes · oure lord prince Iesus 96
 Was nother kyng ne conquerour · til he comsede wexe
 In the manere of a man · and that by muche sleithe;
 As hit by-cometh for a conquerour · to conne menye sleithes,
 And menye wiles and wyt · that wol be a ledere; 100
 And so dude Iesus in hus dayes · ho so dorste tellen hit.
 Som tyme he suffrede · and som tyme he hidde hym;
 And som tyme he fauhete faste · and fleih other-while.
 And som tyme he gaf good · and grauntede hele, 104
 Bothe lyf and lyme · as hym luste, he wrouhte.
 As kynde is of a conquerour · so comsede Iesus,
 Til he hadde alle hem · that he for bledde.

In hus Iuente this Iesus · at the Iuwene feste 108
 Turned water in-to wyn · as holy writ telleth,
 And ther by-gan god of hus grace · gretliche to Dowel.
 For wyn is lykned to lawe · and lyf-holynesse;
 And lawe lackede tho · for men louede nat here enemys. 112
 And Crist counsaileth thus · and comaundeth bothe
 To lerede and to lewede · for to loue oure enemys.
 So at that feste furst · as ich by-fore tolde,
 By-gan god of hus grace · and of hus goodness to Do-wel; 116
 And tho was he cleped and cald · nat onliche Crist, bote Iesu,
 A fauntekyn ful of wytt · *filius Marie*.
 For by-fore hus moder Marie · made he that wonder,
 That sheo furst and formest · sholde ferme by-leyue, 120
 That he thorgh grace was gete · and of no gome elles.
 He wrouhte that by no wyt · bote by worde one,
 After the kynde that he cam of · ther comsede he Dowel.
 And whenne he was woxen more · in hus modres absence, 124
 He made lame to leepe · and ȝaf light to blynd,
 And fedde with two fisshes · and with fyue loues
 Sore a-fyngred fele folke · mo than fyf thousand.
 Thus he comfortede careful · and cauhte a grettere name, 128
 The whiche was Dobet · wher that he wente.
 For deue thorgh hus doynge · and dombe speke and herde,

C. 96. prince TGF; PEM *om.* 98. a EMFTG; P *om.* 104. he MFGT; PE *om.* 106. kynde MFGT; PE *om.* 108. þe MF; PEGT *om.* 112. enemys T; enemys F; enmys M; enemy PEG; *see* l. 114. 116. to MTG; PEF *om.* 117. cleped MEFT; clipede P. 125. PE *ins.* þe *after* and to. 126. two EGT; to PMF. 127. Sore MFTG; So PE.

And alle he heled and halp · that hym of grace asked.
 And tho was he called in contre · of the comune peple, 128
 For the dedes that he did · *fili David, Iesus!*
 For Daud was douȝtiest · of dedes in his tyme,
 The berdes tho songe · *Saul interfecit mille, et David decem*
milia;
 For-thi the contre there Iesu cam · called hym *fili David*, 132
 And nempned hym of Nazereth · and no man so worthi
 To be kaisere or kynge · of the kyngedome of Iuda,
 Ne ouer Iuwes Iustice · as Iesus was, hem thouȝte.
 Where-of Caiphaz hadde enuye · and other of the Iewes, 136
 And forto done hym to deth · day and nyȝte thei casten;
 Kulleden hym on crosse-wyse · at Caluarie on Fryday,
 And sithen buryden his body · and beden that men sholde
 Kepen it fro niȝt-comeres · with knyȝtes y-armed, 140
 For no frendes shulde hym fecche · for prophetes hem tolde,
 That that blessed body · of burieles shulde rise,
 And gone in-to Galile · and gladen his apostles,
 And his moder Marie; · thus men bifore demed. 144
 The knyȝtes that kepten it · biknewe it hem-seluen,
 That angeles and archangeles · ar the day spronge,
 Come knelynge to the corps · and songen, '*Christus resurgens*'
 Verrey man bifor hem alle · and forth with hem he ȝede. 148
 The Iewes preyed hem pees · and bisouȝte the knyȝtes
 Telle the comune that there cam · a compaignye of his aposteles,
 And bywicched hem as thei woke · and away stolen it.
 Ac Marie Magdeleyne · mette hym bi the wey, 152
 Goynge toward Galile · in godhed and manhed,
 And lyues and lokyng · and she aloude cryde,
 In eche a compaignye there she cam · '*Christus resurgens!*'
 Thus cam it out that Cryst ouer-cam · rekeuered and lyued; 156
Sic oportet Christum pati, et intrare, etc.;
 For that that wommen witeth · may nouȝte wel be conseilte!
 Peter perceyued al this · and pursued after,
 Bothe Iames and Iohan · Iesu for to seke,

And alle he heled and halp · that hym of grace askyde.
 Tho he was callyd in the contreo · of the comune people, 132
 For the dedes that he dude · *fili David, Iesus!*
 For Daudid was the douhtiest · of dedus in hus tyme;
 The buyrdes tho songen · *Saul interfecit mille, et David decem*
 milia;
 For-thi the contreye ther Iesu cam · cald hym *fili David*, 136
 Nempnede hym of Nazareth · and no man so worthi
 To beo caiser other kyng · of the kyngdom of Iuda,
 Ne ouer Iuwes Iustice · as Iesus was, hem thouhte.
 Her-of had Cayfas enuye · and othere Iuwes, 140
 And for to do hym to dethe · day and nyght thei casten,
 And culled hym on croys-wyse · at Caluarye, on a Fryday,
 And sutthen buriede hus body · and beden that men sholde
 Kepen hit fro nyght-commeres · with knyghtes y-armed, 144
 For no freonde sholde hit fecche · for prophetes hem tolde,
 That that blessed body · of buriels sholde aryse,
 And gon in-to Galile · and gladen hus apostoles,
 And hus moder Marie; · thus me by-fore deuynede. 148
 The knyghtes that kepten hit · by-knewen hem-selue,
 That aungeles and archaungeles · ar the day spronge,
 Comen kneolyng · to that corps, and songen,
 ‘*Christus rex resurgens*’ · and hit aros after, 152
 Verrei man by-fore hem alle · and forth with hem 3eode.
 The Iuwes preyede hem of pees · and preyede tho knyghtes
 Telle the comune, that ther cam · a companye of hus aposteles,
 And by-wicched hem as thei woke · and a-way stelyn hit. 156
 Ac Marie Magdalene · mette him by the weye,
 Goyng to-ward Galile · in god-hede and man-hede,
 And lyues and lokyng · and heo aloud cryede,
 In eche companye ther heo cam · ‘*Christus resurgens.*’ 160
 Thus cam hit out that Crist ouer-cam · rekeouered, and lyuede;
 Sic oportet Christum pati, et intrare gloriam suam,
 For that that wommen witeth · may nat wel be consail!
 Peter parceyuede al this · and porsuede after,
 Bothe Iames and Iohan · Iesu to seke, 164

C. 135. þo EMG; so P. 139. was MFGT; PE *om.* 141. deþe EMG;
 diþe P. 146. buriels E; burielesse P. 150. and EFGTM; P *om.*
 156. bywocched P. 157. him MFGT; hem PE. 161. leyuede P.
 162. PFT *omit and þat; found in EMG.*

Tadde and ten mo · with Thomas of Ynde. 160
 And as alle thise wise wyes · weren togideres,
 In an hous al bishette · and her dore ybarred,
 Cryst cam in, and al closed · bothe dore and ȝates,
 To Peter and to his aposteles · and seyde '*pax vobis* !' 164
 And toke Thomas by the hande · and tauȝte hym to grope,
 And fele with his fynGRES · his flesschelich herte.
 Thomas touched it · and with his tonge seyde,
 '*Deus meus et dominus meus.*
 Thow art my lorde, I bileue · god, lorde Iesu ! 168
 Thow deydest and deth tholedest · and deme shalt vs alle,
 And now art lyuyng and lokyng · and laste shalt euere !'
 Crist carped thanne · and curteislich seyde,
 'Thomas, for thow trowest this · and trewliche bileuest it, 172
 Blessed mote thow be · and be shalt for euere.
 And blessed mote thei alle be · in body and in soule,
 That neuere shal se me in sizte · as thow doste nouthe,
 And lellich bileuen al this · I loue hem and blesse hem ; 176
 '*Beati qui non viderunt, et crediderunt, etc.*'
 And whan this dede was done · Dobest he tauȝte,
 And ȝaf Pieres power · and pardoun he graunted
 To alle manere men · mercy and forȝyfnes,
 Hym myȝte men to assoille · of alle manere synnes, 180
 In couenant that thei come · and knowleche to paye,
 To Pieres pardon the Plowman · *redde quod debes.*
 Thus hath Pieres powere · be his pardoun payed,
 To bynde and to vnbynde · bothe here and elles-where, 184
 And assoille men of alle synnes · saue of dette one.
 Anone after an heigh · vp in-to heuene
 He went, and wonyeth there · and wil come atte laste,
 And rewarde hym riȝte wel · that *reddit quod debet*— 188
 Payeth parfitly · as pure trewthe wolde.
 And what persone payeth it nouȝt · punysshē he thinketh,
 And demen hem at domes daye · bothe quikke and ded ;
 The gode to the godhede · and to grete Ioye, 192
 And wikke to wonye · in wo with-uten ende.'

B. 176. *et crediderunt* COBY ; LW om.
 L om. where.

188. L ins. wil after And.

181. knewleche L.

184.

Taddee and ten mo · with Thomas of Ynde;
 And as alle these wise wyes · weren to-gederes
 In an hous al by-shutt · and here dore barred,
 Crist cam yn, and al was closed · bothe dore and ȝates, 168
 To Peter and to hus aposteles · and seyde, '*pax uobis!*'
 And took Thomas by the hand · and tauhte hym to grope,
 And fele with hus fyngres · hus fleshliche heorte.
 Thomas touchede hit · and with hus tunge seyde, 172
 '*Dominus meus et deus meus,*
 Thow art my lord, ich by-leyue · god, lord Iesu,
 That deydest and deth tholedest · and deme shalt ous alle,
 And now art lyuyng and lokyng · and laste shalt euere.'
 Crist carpede thenne · and corteisliche seide, 176
 'Thomas, for thou trowest this · and trewely by-leyuest hit,
 Yblessed mote thou beo · and beo shalt for euere;
 And blessed moten thei beo · in body and in soule,
 That neuere shullen seo in syht · as thou seost nouthe, 180
 And leelly by-leyuen al this · ich loue hem and blesse hem;
 '*Beati qui non uiderunt, et crediderunt.*'
 And when this dede was don · Dobest he thouhte,
 And ȝaf Peers power · and pardon he grauntede
 To alle manere of men · mercy and forȝyuenesse, 184
 And ȝaf hym myghte to asoylye men · of alle manere synnes,
 In couenaunt that thei come · and kneweliched to paye
 To Peers pardon the Plouhman · *redde quod debes.*
 Thus haueth Peers power · beo hus pardon payed, 188
 To bynde and vnbynde · bothe here and elleswher,
 And assoille of alle synnes · saue of dette one.
 A-non after an hyh · vp in-to heuene
 He wente, and woneth there · and wol come atte laste, 192
 And rewardy him right wel · that *reddit quod debet*,
 Payeth now parfitliche · as pure treuthe wolde.
 And what persone payeth hit nat · punysshyn he thenketh,
 And demen hem at domesday · bothe quyke and dede; 196
 The gode to the god-hede · and to grete Ioye,
 And wyckede to wonye · in wo with-outen ende.'

C. 165. Taddee EM; Tadee PG. 166. as FMGT; PE om. wyes FGT; weyes P. 170. to grope EMFGT; ȝo grepe P. 173. art MFT; ert PEG.
 184. an (*for* and) P. 187. ȝe T; PEMFG om. 189. elleswer P. 193.
 him FT; hym G; hem PEM. 195. wat P. 196. hem EFG; hym PT.

Thus Conscience of Crist · and of the crosse carped,
And conseilled me to knele ther-to · and thanne come, me
thouȝte,

One *spiritus paraclitus* · to Pieres and to his felawes; 196
In lyknesse of a lȝtnynge · he lȝte on hem alle,
And made hem konne and knowe · alkyn langages.
I wondred what that was · and wagged Conscience,
And was afered of the lȝte · for in fyres lyknesse 200
Spiritus paraclitus · ouer-spradde hem alle.

Quod Conscience, and kneled · ‘this is Crystes messenger,
And cometh fro the grete god · and Grace is his name.
Knele now,’ quod Conscience · ‘and if thou canst synge, 204
Welcome hym and worshipe hym · with “*veni, creator spiritus.*”
Thanne songe I that songe · and so did many hundreth,
And cryden with Conscience · ‘help vs, god of grace!’
And thanne bigan Grace · to go with Piers Plowman, 208
And conseilled hym and Conscience · the comune to sompne—
‘For I wil dele to-daye · and dyuyde grace,
To alkynnes creatures · that kan her fyue wittes,
Tresore to lyue by · to her lyues ende, 212
And wepne to fyȝte with · that wil neure faille.
For Antecryst and his · al the worlde shal greue,
And acombre the, Conscience · but if Cryst the helpe.
And fals prophetes fele · flatereres and glosers 216
Shullen come, and be curatoures · ouer kynges and erlis,
And Pryde shal be pope · prynce of holycherche,
Coueytise and Vnkyndenesse · cardinales hym to lede.
For-thi,’ quod Grace, ‘er I go · I wil gyue ȝow tresore, 220
And wepne to fyȝte with · whan Antecryst ȝow assailleth.’
And gaf eche man a grace · to gye with hym-seluen,
That ydelnesse encombre hym nouȝt · envye, ne pryde,
Diuisiones graciaryum sunt, etc.

Some he ȝaf wytte · with wordes to shewe, 224
Witte to wynne her lyflode with · as the worlde asketh,
As prechoures and prestes · and prentyses of lawe,
Thei lelly to lyue · by laboure of tonge,
And bi witte to wissen other · as Grace hem wolde teche. 228

Thus Conscience of Crist · and of the croys carpede,
 And consailede me to kneole ther-to · and thenne cam, me
 thouhte, 200

On *spiritus paracletus* · to Peers and to hus felawes,
 In liknesse of a lyghtnyng · a-lyghte on hem alle,
 And made hem conne and knowe · alle kynne languages.
 Ich wondrede what that was · and waggede Conscience, 204
 And was a-fered for the lyght · for in fuyres lyknesse
Spiritus paracletus · ouer-spradde hem alle.

Quath Conscience tho, and kneolede · ‘this is Cristes messenger,
 And cometh fro the grete god · Grace is hus name. 208

Kneole now,’ quath Conscience · ‘and yf thow conne synge,
 Welcome hym and worshupe hym · with “*veni, creator spiritus.*”’
 And ich sang that song tho · and so dude meny hondred,
 And cryden with Conscience · ‘help ous, god of grace!’ 212

Tho by-gan Grace · to go with Peers the Plouhman,
 And consailede hym and Conscience · the comune to someny—
 ‘For ich wolle dele to-day · and diuyde grace
 To alle kynne creatures · that can hus fif wittes; 216

Tresour to lyue by · to here lyues ende,
 And wepne to fight with · that wol neuere faille.
 For Antecrist and hise · shal al the worlde greue,
 And encombry the, Conscience · bote yf Crist the helpe. 220

And fele false prophetes · flaterers and glosers
 Shullen come, and be curatours · ouer kynges and erles.
 Thanne shal Pruyde be pope · and pryns of holychurche,
 Couetise and Vnkyndenesse · cardinales hym to lede. 224

For-thi,’ quath Grace, ‘ar ich go · ich wole gyue 3ou tresour,
 And wepne to fyghte with · whanne Antecrist 3ou assaileth.’
 And gaf ech man a grace · to gye with hym-self,

That ydelnesse ne encombre hem nat · ne enuye, ne pruyde;
Diuisiones graciaram sunt. 228

To somme men he 3af wit · with wordes to shewe,
 To wynne with truthe · that the worlde asketh,
 As preostes and prechours · and prentises of lawe,
 Thei to lyue leelly · by labour of tounge, 232
 And by wit to wyssen othere · as Grace wolde hem teche.

C. 202. licknesse P. lyghtynge PG. 203. conne EMG; come PT.
 205. a-ferede P. 219. wordle P. 229. wiþ MEFT; PG om.

And some he kenned crafte · and kunnyng of syzte,
 With sellyng and buggynge · her bylyf to wynne,
 And some he lered to laboure · a lele lyf and a trewe,
 And somme he tauzte to tilie · to dyche and to thecchie, 232
 To wynne with her lyflode · by lore of his techynge.
 And some to dyuyne and diuide · noumbres to kenne;
 And some to compas craftily · and coloures to make;
 And some to se and to saye · what shulde bifalle, 236
 Bothe of wel and of wo · telle it or it felle,
 As astronomyenes thorw astronomye · and philosophres wyse.
 And some to ryde and to recoeure · that vnrihtfully was wonne;
 He wissed hem wynne it azeine · thorw wightnesse of handes,
 And fecchen it fro fals men · with Foluyles lawes. 241
 And some he lered to lyue · in longynge to ben hennes,
 In pouerte and in penaunce · to preye for alle Crystene.
 And alle he lered to be lele · and eche a crafte loue other, 244
 And forbad hem alle debate · that none were amonge hem.
 'Thowgh some be clenner than somme · 3e se wel,' quod
 Grace,
 'That he that vseth the fairest crafte · to the foulest I couth
 haue put hym,
 Thinketh alle,' quod Grace · 'that grace cometh of my 3ifte;
 Loke that none lakke other · but loueth alle as bretheren. 249
 And who that moste maistries can · be myldest of berynge,
 And crouneth Conscience kynge · and maketh Crafte 3owre
 stuard,
 And after Craftes conseilte · clotheth 3ow and fede. 252
 For I make Pieres the Plowman · my procuratour and my reve,
 And regystrere to receyue · *redde quod debes*.
 My prowor and my plowman · Piers shal ben on erthe,
 And for to tulye treuthe · a teme shal he haue.' 256
 Grace gaue Piers a teme · foure gret oxen;
 That on was Luke, a large beste · and a lowe-chered,
 And Marke, and Mathew the thrydde · myghty bestes bothe,
 And Ioigned to hem one Iohan · most gentil of alle, 260
 The prys nete of Piers plow · passyng alle other.

And somme he kende craftes · and connyng of syghte,
 With syllynge and byggyng · here by-lyue to wyne.
 And somme he lerede to laboure · a londe and a watere, 236
 And lyue by that labour · a leel lyf and a trewe.
 And somme he tauhte to tulye · to theche and to coke,
 As here wit wold · when the tyme come.
 And somme to dyuyne and dyuyde · numbres to kenne, 240
 And craftely to compassen · and colours to make.
 And somme to seo and to seye · what sholde by-falle
 Bothe of wele and of wo · and be war by-fore,
 As astronomyens thorw astronomye · and philosophers wise. 244
 And somme to ryde and rekeuere · that vnryghtfulliche was
 wonne;
 He wissede men wynnen hit aȝeyn · thorgh wyghtnesse of handes,
 And fecchen hit fro false men · with Foleuyles lawes.
 And somme he lerede to lyue · in longynge to be hennes, 248
 In pouerte and in pacience · to preye for alle Crystyne.
 And alle he lerede to beo leell · and eche a craft loue othere,
 Nother bost ne debat · beo among hem alle.
 'Thauh somme be clannere than some · ȝe seon wel,' quath
 Grace, 252
 'That alle craft and connyng · cam of my ȝyfte.
 Loke that non lacken other · bote louye as bretheren,
 And he that most maistries can · beo myldest of berynge.
 And coroneth Conscience kyng · and maketh Craft ȝowre sty-
 warde, 256
 And after Craftes consail · clotheth ȝow and fedeth.
 For ich make Peers Plouhman · my procuratour and my reue,
 And registrer to receyuen · *redde quod debes*.
 My prower and my plouhman · Peers shal beo on erthe; 260
 And for to tulye treuthe · a teome shal he haue.'
 Grace gaf to Peers a teome · of foure grete oxen;
 That on was Luc, a large beest · and a louh-chered,
 Marc, and Matheu the thirde · myghty beestes bothe; 264
 And Ioyned til hem on Iohan · most gentil of alle,
 The prys neet of Peers plouh · passynge alle othere.

C. 234. PE *ins.* hem *after* kende. 237. *and* a EMFGT; P *om.* 238.
 1st to MFGT; PE *om.* ȝeche E; ȝeche MT; teche PF. 241. craftely
 F; PEGT *om.* 248. lererede P. 252. clannore P. 254. broþrene P.
 260. prower EG; prowour F; paruyour M; power P. 263. louh-chyrede P.

And Grace gaue Pieres · of his goodnesse, foure stottis,
 Al that his oxen eryl · they to harwe after.
 On hyzte Austyne · and Ambrose an-other, 264
 Gregori the grete clerke · and Ierome the gode ;
 Thise foure, the feithe to teche · folweth Pieres teme,
 And harwed in an handwhile · al holy scripture,
 Wyth two harwes that thei hadde · an olde and a newe, 268
Id est, vetus testamentum et nouum.

And Grace gaue greynes · the cardynales vertues,
 And sewe hem in mannes soule · and sithen he tolde her names.
Spiritus prudencie · the firste seed hyzte,
 And who so eet that · ymagyne he shulde, 272
 Ar he did any dede · deuyse wel the ende ;
 And lerned men a ladel bugge · with a longe stele,
 That cast for to kepe a crokke · to saue the fatte abouen.

The secounde seed hizte · *spiritus temperancie*. 276
 He that ete of that seed · hadde suche a kynde,
 Shulde neuere mete ne mochel drynke · make hym to swelle,
 Ne sholde no scorne ne scolde · oute of skyl hym brynge,
 Ne wynnynge, ne welthe · of worldeliche ricchesse, 280
 Waste worde of ydelnesse · ne wykked speche meue ;
 Shulde no curyous clothe · comen on hys rugge,
 Ne no mete in his mouth · that maister Iohan spiced.

The thridde seed that Pieres sewe · was *spiritus fortitudinis*.
 And who so eet of that seed · hardy was eue 285
 To suffre al that god sent · sykenesse and angres ;
 Myzte no lesynge ne lyere · ne losse of worldely catel
 Maken hym for any mournynge · that he nas merye in soule,
 And bolde and abydynge · bismeres to suffre, 289
 And playeth al with pacyence · *et parce michi, domine*,
 And couered hym vnder conseil · of Catoun the wyse ;
Esto forti animo, cum sis dampnatus inique. 292

The fierthe seed that Pieres sewe · was *spiritus iusticie*,
 And he that eet of that seed · shulde be euere trewe
 With god, and nouzt agast · but of gyle one.
 For gyle goth so pryuely · that good faith other-while 296

And sutthe Grace of hus goodnesse · gaf Peers foure stottes,
Al that hus oxen ereden · thei to harwen after. 268

On hihte Austyn · and Ambrosie another,
Gregori the grete clerk · and Ierom the goode.
Theose foure, the faith to teche · folwede Peers teom,
And harowede in an hand-whyle · al holy scripture, 272
With to eythes that thei hadden · an olde and a newe ;

Vetus testamentum et nouum.

And Grace gaf to Peers greynes · cardinales uertues,
And sewe hit in mannes soule · and sitthen he tolde here names.
Spiritus prudencie · the furste sed hihte ; 276
That ho so eet that seed · ymagenye he sholde,
Er he dude eny dede · deuyse wel the ende ;
And lerede men a ladel bygge · with a long stele,
That cast for to kele a crokke · and saue the fatte aboue. 280

The secunde seed highte · *spiritus temperancie* ;
He that eet of that seed · hadde suche a kynde,
Sholde neuere mete ne myschief · make hym to swelle ;
Ne sholde no scornere · out of skyle hym brynge, 284
Nother wynnyng, ne welthe · of worldliche richesse,
Wast word, ne ydelnesse · ne wyckede speche meoue.
Sholde no curiouse clothe · come on hus rygge,
Nother mete in hus mouthe · that maister Iohan spicede. 288

The thrydde seed that Peers sewe · was *spiritus fortitudinis* ;
And ho so eet of that seed · hardy was he euere
To suffren al that god sente · syknesses and angres ;
Myghte no lyere with lesynges · ne loos of worldly catell 292
Make hym for eny mournyng · that he ne was mury in soule,
And bold of a-bydyng · busemares to suffren,
And plede with pacience · and *parce michi, domine* ;
And keouered hym vnder consail · of Caton the wise, 296
Esto forti animo · cum sis dampnatus inique.

The furthe seed that Peers sewe · was *spiritus iusticie* ;
And he that eet of that seed · sholde be euere trewe
With god, and nat a-gast · bote of gyle one. 300
For gyle goth so priuely · that good faithe other-whyle

C. 272. wyle PG. 277, 282. eet MFG ; eete P. 283. to MFT ;
PEG om. 285. wordliche P. 290. eet MFG ; ete PE. 292. ne MFGT ;
no PE. wordly PG. 298. *spiritus iusticie* EMFGT ; P has a blank space.
299. euere M ; euene PEGT. trywe P. 301. wyle P.

May nouȝte ben aspyed · for *spiritus iusticie*.

Spiritus iusticie · spareth nouȝte to spille

Hem that ben gulty · and forto correcte

The kyng, ȝif he falle · in gylte or in trespasse. 300

For counteth he no kynges wratthe · whan he in courte sitteth

To demen as a domes-man; · adradde was he neure,

Noither of duke ne of deth · that he ne dede the lawe,

For present or for preyere · or any prynces lettres; 304

He dede equite to alle · euene-forth his powere.

Thise foure sedes Pieres sewe · and sitthe he did hem harwe

Wyth olde lawe and newe lawe · that loue myȝte wexe

Amonge the foure vertues · and vices destroye. 308

For comunelich in contrees · kammokes and wedes

Fouleth the fruite in the felde · there thei growe togyderes;

And so don vices · vertues worthy.

Quod Piers, 'harweth alle that kunneth kynde witte · bi conseil
of this doctours, 312

And tulyeth after her techynge · the cardinale vertues.'

'Aȝeines thi greynes,' quod Grace · 'bigynneth for to ripe,

Ordeigne the an hous, Piers · to herberwe in thi cornes.'

'By god! Grace,' quod Piers · 'ȝe moten gyue tymbre, 316

And ordeyne that hous · ar ȝe hennes wende.'

And Grace gaue hym the crosse · with the croune of thornes,

That Cryst vpon Caluarye · for mankynde on pyned,

And of his baptesme and blode · that he bledde on rode 320

He made a maner mortar · and Mercy it hȝte.

And there-with Grace bigan · to make a good foundement,

And watted it and walled it · with his peynes and his passioun,

And of al holywrit · he made a rose after, 324

And called that hous Vnite · holicherche on Englisshe.

And whan this dede was done · Grace deuised

A carte, hȝte Cristendome · to carye Pieres sheues;

And gaf hym caples to his carte · Contricioun and Confessioun,

And made Presthode haywarde · the while hym-self went 329

As wyde as the worlde is · with Pieres to tulye treuthe.

May nat be aspied · thorw *spiritus iusticie*.

Spiritus iusticie · spareth nat to spille

Hem that beoth gulty · and for to corecte 304

The kyng, and the kyng falle · in eny thyng gulty.

For counteth he no kynges wraththe · when he in court sytteth

To deme as a domesman; · adrad was he neuere,

Nother of duk ne of deth · that he ne doth the lawe, 308

For present other for preyoure · othere eny princes letteres;

He dude equyte to alle · euene-forth hus knowynge.

Theese foure seedes Peeres sewe · and sutthen he dude hem
harwen

With olde lawe and newe lawe · that loue myghte wexe 312

Amonge these foure vertues · and vices destruyen.

For comunliche in contreies · cammokes and weodes

Fouleth the frut in the felde · ther thei growen to-gederes;

And so doth vices vertues · ‘and for-thi,’ quath Peers, 316

‘Harweth alle that conneth kynde wit · by counsail of theose
doctours,

And tulyeth after here techynge · the cardinale vertues.’

‘Aȝeynst that thi greynes,’ quath Grace · ‘bygynneth to growe,
Ordeyne the an hous, Peers · to herberghen in thi cornes.’ 320

‘By god, Grace,’ quath Peers · ‘ȝe mote gyue me tymber,

And ordeyne that hous · er ȝe hennes wende.’

And Grace gaf hym the croys · with the corone of thornes,

That Crist vp-on Caluarie · for mankynde on peynede; 324

And of hus baptism and blod · that he bledde on rode

He made a maner mortar · and Mercy hit hihte.

And ther-with Grace by-gan · to make a good foundement,

And watelide hit and wallyde hit · with hus peynes and hus
passion, 328

And of alle holy writt · he made a roof after,

And cald that hous Vnite · holychurche in Englishe.

And whanne this dede was don · Grace deuysede

A cart, hihte Cristendome · to carien home Peers sheues; 332

And gaf hym capeles to hus cart · Contricion with Confession,

And made Preosthood haiwarde · the while hym-self wente

As wide as the worlde is · with Peers to tulye treuthe,

C. 302. aspiede P. 312. newe EMFGT; with newe P. 316. an ver-
tues PT; but EMFG omit an. 321. god MFGT; godes PE. 322. her
(for er) P. wende P. 324. one (for on) P. 334. wile P.

Now is Pieres to the plow · and Pruyde it aspyde,
 And gadered hym a grete oest · to greuen he thinketh 332
 Conscience and al Crystene · and cardinale vertues,
 Blowe hem doune and breke hem · and bite atwo the mores;
 And sente forth Surquydous · his seriaunt of armes,
 And his spye Spille-loue · one Speke-yuel-byhynde. 336
 Thise two come to Conscience · and to Crystene peple,
 And tolde hem tydynges · ‘that tyne thei shulde the sedes,
 That Pieres there hadde ysowen · the cardynal vertues;
 And Pieres berne worth broke · and thei that ben in Vnite 340
 Shulle come out, and Conscience · and 3owre two caples,
 Confessioun and Contricioun · and 3owre carte the Byleue
 Shal be coloured so queyntly · and keuered vnder owre sophistrie,
 That Conscience shal nou3te · knowe by contricioun, 344
 Ne by confessioun · who is Cristene or hethen,
 Ne no maner marchaunt · that with moneye deleth,
 Where he wynne wyth ri3te · with wronge, or with vsure.
 With suche coloures and queyntise · cometh Pryde y-armed,
 With the lorde that lyueth after · the luste of his body, 349
 To wasten, on welfare · and on wykked kepynge,
 Al the worlde in a while · thorw owre witte,’ quod Pruyde.

Quod Conscience to alle Crystene tho · ‘my conseil is to
 wende 352

Hastiliche in-to Vnyte · and holde we vs there,
 And preye we that a pees were · in Piers berne the Plowman.
 For witterly I wote wel · we beth nou3te of strengthe
 To gone agayne Pryde · but Grace were with vs.’ 356
 And thanne cam Kynde Wytte · Conscience to teche,
 And cryde and comaunded · al Crystene peple,
 For to deluen a dyche · depe a-boute Vnite,
 That holy-cherche stode in Vnite · as it a pyle were. 360
 Conscience comaunded tho · al Crystene to delue,
 And make a muche mote · that my3te ben a strengthe,
 To helpe holycherche · and hem that it kepeth.
 Thanne alkyn Crystene · saue comune wommen, 364
 Repenteden and refused synne · saue they one;
 And fals men, flatereres · vsureres and theues,
 Lyes and questmongeres · that were forsworen ofte,

B. 344. conscioun (*for* conscience) L. 360. were COBY; L *om.* 366.
 flateres L.

And the londe of by-leyue · the lawe of holychurche. 336
 Now is Peeres to the plouh; · Pruyde hit aspide,
 And gadered hym a gret ost · greuen he thenketh
 Conscience, and alle Cristene · and cardinale uertues,
 To blowen hem doun and breken hem · and bite a-two the rotes;
 And sente forth sourquidours · hus seriauns of armes, 341
 And hus aspide Spille-loue · on Speke-vuel-by-hynde.
 These to-comen to Conscience · and to Cristyne people,
 And tolden hem tydynges · 'that tyne they sholde 344
 The seedes that syre Peers sewe · the cardinale uertues;
 And Peers bern worth to-broke · and thei that ben in Vnite
 Shullen come out, and Conscience · and ȝowre two capeles,
 Contricion and Confession · and ȝoure cart Bi-leyue 348
 Shal be colered so queyntely · and keouered vnder oure sophistrie,
 That Conscience shal nat · knowe by contricion,
 Nother by confession · ho is Cristyne other hethene,
 Ne no manere marchaunt · that with monye deleth, 352
 Whether he wyne with right · with wrang, other with vsure.
 With suche colour and queyntise · cometh Pruyde y-armed,
 With the lord that lyueth after · the lust of hus bodye,
 To wasten, in welfare · and in wickede kepynge, 356
 Al the worlde in a while · thorough oure wit,' quath Pruyde.
 Quath Conscience to alle Crystyne tho · 'my consail is, we wende
 Hastiliche in-to Vnite · and holde we ous there;
 Preye we that a pees were · in Peers bern the Plouhman. 360
 For wyterly ich wot wel · we beoth nat of strengthe
 To go a-gayn Pruyde · bote Grace with ous were.'
 And thenne cam Kynde Wit · Conscience to teche;
 He criede, and comaundede · alle Cristyne people 364
 To delue and dike a deop dicke · al aboute Vnite,
 That holychurche stod in holynesse · as hit were a pile.
 Conscience comaundede tho · alle Crystyne to delue,
 And make a muche mot · that myghte be a strengthe, 368
 To helpe holychurche · and hem that hit kepeth.
 Thenne alle kynne Crystyne · saue comune wommen,
 Repentede and refusede synne · saue thei one;
 And a sisour and a somenour · that weren for-swore ofte, 372

C. 340. a-two EFGT; a-to PS. 349. keouerede P. 353. Weder
 (for Wheper) P. 354. y-armed G; y-armyd ST; armede PE; see l. 144.
 355. loust P. 372. a sisour MFSGT; assisour P.

Wytynge and willefully · with the false helden, 368
 And for syluer were forswore · sothely thei wist it.
 There nas no Crystene creature · that kynde witte hadde,
 Saue schrewes one · suche as I spak of,
 That he ne halpe a quantite · holynesse to wexe. 372
 Somme thorw bedes-byddynge · and somme thorw pylgrymage,
 And other pryue penaunce · and some thorw penyes-delynge.
 And thanne welled water · for wikked werkes,
 Egerlich ernynge · out of mennes eyen. 376
 Clennesse of the comune · and clerkes clene lyuyng
 Made Vnite holicherche · in holynesse to stonde.
 'I care nouzte,' quod Conscience · 'though Pryde come nouth,
 The lorde of luste shal be letted · al this lente, I hope. 380
 Cometh,' quod Conscience · '3e Cristene, and dyneth,
 That han laboured lelly · al this lente-tyme.
 Here is bred yblessed · and goddes body ther-vnder.
 Grace thorw goddes worde · gaue Pieres power, 384
 And myztes to maken it · and men to ete it after,
 In helpe of her hele · onys in a moneth,
 Or as ofte as they hadden nede · tho that hadde ypayed
 To Pieres pardoun the Plowman · *redde quod debes.*' 388
 'How?' quod al the comune · 'thow conseildest vs to 3elde
 Al that we owen any wyzte · ar we go to housel?'
 'That is my conseil,' quod Conscience · 'and cardynale vertues,
 That vche man for3yue other · and that wyl the *palernoster*, 392
Et dimitte nobis debita nostra, etc.,
 And so to ben assoilled · and sithen ben houseled.'
 '3e, bawe!' quod a brewere · 'I wil nouzt be reuled,
 Bi Iesu! for al 3owre Ianglynge · with *spiritus iusticie*,
 Ne after Conscience, by Cryste · whil I can selle 396
 Bothe dregges and draffe · and drawe it at on hole,
 Thikke ale and thinne ale · for that is my kynde,
 And nouzte hakke after holynesse; · holde thi tonge, Conscience!
 Of *spiritus iusticie* · thow spekest moche an ydel!' 400
 'Caytyue,' quod Conscience · 'cursed wrecche!
 Vnblessed artow, brewere · but if the god helpe;

Witynge and wilfulliche · with the false thei helden,
 And for seluere were for-swore · sothly thei wisten hit.
 Ther ne was Cristyne creature · that kynde wit hadde,
 That he ne halp a quantyte · holynesse to wexe; 376
 Some by bedes-byddyng · and somme by pilgrimages,
 Other othere pryueie penaunces · and somme thorw pansdelynge.
 And thenne water welled · for wyckede werkes,
 Egrelliche ȝernynge · out of mennys eyen. 380
 Clannesse of the comune · and clerkes clene lyuyng
 Made Unite holychurche · in holynesse stonde.
 'Ich care nat,' quath Conscience · 'thauh Pruyde come nouthe,
 The lord of lust shal beo lett · al this lente, ich hope. 384
 Cometh now,' quath Conscience · 'ȝe Cristyne, and dyneth,
 That han labored leelly · al this lente-tyme.
 Her is bred yblessid · and godes body ther-vnder.
 Grace gaf thorw godes worde · to Peers Plouhman power 388
 And myghte to maken hit · and men for to eten hit,
 In help of here hele · ones in a monthe,
 Other as ofte as thei hadde neode · thei that hadden payed
 To Peers pardon the Plouhman · *redde quod debes.*' 392
 'How?' quath alle the comune · 'consailest thou ous to ȝelde
 Al that we owen eny wyght · er we go to housele?'
 'That is my consail,' quath Conscience · 'and cardinale vertues,
 That iche man forȝiue other · and that wile the pater-noster;
Et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus, etc.,
 And so to beo asoilled · and sytthen beo housled.' 397
 'ȝe, bawe!' quath a brewere · 'ich wol nat beo rueled,
 By Iesu! for al ȝoure iangelynge · after *spiritus iusticie*,
 Ne after Conscience, by Crist · for ich couthe selle 400
 Bothe dregges and draf · and drawe at one hole
 Thicke ale and thynne ale · and that is my kynde,
 And nat to hacke after holynesse; · hold thy tonge, Conscience!
 Of *spiritus iusticie* · thow spekest muche an ydel!' 404
 'Caitif,' quath Conscience · 'corsede wreche!
 Unblessed art thou, brewere · bote yf god the helpe;

C. 373. Whitynge P. 376. to MFSGT; PE om. 378. Ope (for
 Ope) P. 383. PEG insert now after nat. 384. loust P. 390.
 mounthe P. 392. ȝe FSTG; PEM om. 396. From T; also in MFSG;
 PE omit this line. *dimittimus* is in F only. 397. asoillede P. 398.
 ruelede P. 406. art MFST; ert PEG.

But thow lyue by lore · of *spiritus iusticie*,
 The chief seed that Pieres sewe · ysaued worstow neure. 404
 But Conscience the comune fede · and cardynale vertues,
 Leue it wel thei ben loste · bothe lyf and soule.
 ‘Thanne is many man ylost’ · quod a lewed vycory,
 ‘I am a curatour of holykyrke · and come neure in my tyme
 Man to me, that me couth telle · of cardinale vertues, 409
 Or that acounted Conscience · at a cokkes fether or an hennes!
 I knewe neure cardynal · that he ne cam fro the pope,
 And we clerkes, whan they come · for her comunes payeth, 412
 For her pelure and her palfreyes mete · and piloures that hem
 folweth.
 The comune *clamat cotidie* · eche a man to other,
 ‘The contre is the curseder · that cardynales come inne;
 And there they ligge and lenge moste · lecherye there regneth:’—
 For-thi,’ quod this vicori · ‘be verrey god, I wolde 417
 That no cardynal come · amonge the comune peple,
 But in her holynesse · holden hem stille
 At Auynoun, amonge the Iuwes · *cum sancto sanctus eris, etc.*,
 Or in Rome, as here rule wole · the reliques to kepe; 421
 And thow, Conscience, in kynges courte · and shuldest neure
 come thennes,
 And Grace, that thow gredest so of · gyour of alle clerkes,
 And Pieres with his newe plow · and eke with his olde, 424
 Emperour of al the worlde · that alle men were Cristene!
 Inparfyt is that pope · that al peple shulde helpe,
 And sendeth hem that sleeth suche · as he shulde saue;
 And wel worth Piers the Plowman · that pursueth god in doynge,
Qui pluit super iustos · et iniustos at ones, 429
 And sent the sonne to saue · a cursed mannes tilthe,
 As bryzte as to the best man · and to the beste woman.
 Rihte so Pieres the Plowman · peyneth hym to tulye 432
 As wel for a wastour · and wenches of the stuwes,
 As for hym-self and his seruauntz · saue he is firste yserued;
 And traueilleth and tulyeth · for a tretour also sore
 As for a trewe tydy man · al tymes ylyke. 436

Bote thow lyue by the lore · of *spiritus iusticie*,
 The chef seede that Peers sewe · saued worst thow neuere. 408
 Bote Conscience the comune fede · and cardinale vertues,
 Leyf hit wel, we beon lost · bothe lyf and soule.
 'Then is meny man ylost' · quath a lewede vicory;
 'Ich am a curatoure of holykirke · and cam neuere in my tyme
 Man to me, that couthe telle · of cardinale uertues, 413
 Other that acountede Conscience · a cockes fether other an hennes!
 Ich knew neuere cardinal · that he ne cam fro the pope,
 And we clerkes, when thei cometh · for here comunes payeth,
 For here pelure and palfrayes mete · and pylours that hem folwen.
 The comune *clamat cotidie* · eche man to othere,
 'The countrey is the corsedour · ther cardinales cometh ynne;
 And ther thei liggen and lengen most · lecherie ther regneth:—
 For-thi,' quath this vicory · 'by verrai god, ich wolde 421
 That no cardinal come · a-mong the comune people,
 Bote in here holinesse · holden hem stille
 At Auenoun, a-mong Iuwes · *cum sancto sanctus eris, etc.*, 424
 Other in Rome, as here ruwele wolde · the relikes to kepe;
 And thow, Conscience, in kynges court · and sholdest neuere
 come thennes,
 And Grace, that thou so gredest of · were gyour of alle clerkes,
 And Peers with hus newe plouh · and his olde bothe 428
 Emperour of alle the worlde · that alle men were Crystyne!
 Imparfit is the pope · that al the people sholde helpe,
 And soudeth hem that sleeth · suche as he sholde saue;
 Ac wel worthe Peers Plouhman · that porsueth god in doynge,
Qui pluit super iustos · et iniustos at ones, 433
 And sent the sonne to saue · a corsed mannes tulthe,
 As bryght as to the beste man · other to the beste womman.
 Ryght so Peers Plouhman · peyneth hym to tulye 436
 As wel for a wastour · other for a wenche atte stuwes,
 As for hym-self and his seruauns · saue he is furst yserued;
 So blessed beo Peers Plouhman · that peyneth hym to tulie,
 And trauaileth and tuleth · for a tretour al-so sore 440
 As for a trewe tydy man · alle tymes ylyke.

C. 412. kirke T; churche PEFSG. 420. liggyn P. 421. þeis (for
 þis) P. 423. holden EFG; heolden P. 426. come TG; go PEMFS.
 441. triwe P. lyke P; y-liche STG; i-liche MF; read ylyke.

And worshiped be he that wrouȝte al · bothe good and wykke,
 And suffreth that synful be · til some tyme that thei repente.
 And god amende the pope · that pileth holykirke,
 And cleymeth bifor the kynge · to be keper ouer Crystene, 440
 And counteth nouȝt though Crystene · ben culled and robbed,
 And fynt folke to fyȝte · and Cristene blode to spille,
 Aȝeyne the olde lawe and newe lawe · as Luke ther-of witnesseth,
Non occides : michi vindictam, etc.

It semeth, by so · hym-self hadde his wille, 444
 That he ne recbeth riȝte nouȝte · of al the remenaunte.
 And Cryst of his curteisye · the cardinales saue,
 And tourne her witte to wisdom · and to wele of soule !
 For the comune,' quod this curatour · 'counten ful litel 448
 The conseil of Conscience · or cardinale vertues,
 But if thei seiȝe as by syȝte · somewhat to wynnynge;
 Of gyle ne of gabbynge · gyue thei neuere tale.
 For *spiritus prudencie* · amonge the peple, is gyle, 452
 And alle tho faire vertues · as vyces thei semeth;
 Eche man sotileth a sleight · synne forto hyde,
 And coloureth it for a kunnyng · and a clene lyuyng.
 Thanne lough there a lorde · and 'by this liȝte,' sayde, 456
 'I halde it ryȝte and resoun · of my reue to take
 Al that myne auditour · or elles my stuarde
 Conseilleth me by her acounte · and my clerkes wrytynge.
 With *spiritus intellectus* · they seke the recces rolles, 460
 And with *spiritus fortitudinis* · fecche it I wole.'

And thanne come there a kynge · and bi his croune seyde,
 'I am kynge with croune · the comune to reule,
 And holykirke and clergie · fro cursed men to defende. 464
 And if me lakketh to lyue by · the lawe wil I take it,
 There I may hastlokest it haue · for I am hed of lawe;
 For ȝe ben but membres · and I aboue alle.
 And sith I am ȝowre aller hed · I am ȝowre aller hele, 468
 And holycherche chief help · and chiftaigne of the comune.
 And what I take of ȝow two · I take it atte techynge

B. 444. hadd L.
 lough L.

450. seiȝe W; seigh C; seen O; sowe L.
 461. it WCOBY; L om.

And worsheped be he that wrouhte al · bothe good and wykke,
 And suffreth hem that synful beon · til tyme that thei repenten.
 And god amende the pope · that pileth holichurche, 444
 And cleymeth by-fore the kyng · to beo kepere ouere Cristyne,
 And counteth noȝt thauh Cristene men · be culled and robbed,
 And fyndeth folke to fighte · and Cristene blod to spille,
 Aȝeyn the lawe bothe old and newe · as Luk bereth wittnesse,

Non occides: et alibi, Michi uindictam, et ego retribuam.

Sikerliche hit semeth, by so · hym-self hadde hus wil, 449
 That he reccheth right nouht · of al the other remenaunt.
 And Crist of hus cortesye · the cardinales saue,
 And turne here wit to wisdom · and welthe for the soule! 452
 For the comune,' quath this curatour · 'counten ful litel
 The consail of Conscience · other cardinale uertues,
 Bote hit sounne as by syght · som what to wynnynge;
 Of gile ne of gabbynge · gyueth thei neuere tale. 456

For *spiritus prudencie* · among the people, is gyle,
 And tho faire vertues · as vices thei hem semeth;
 Eche man soteleth a sleithe · synne for to huyde,
 And coloreth hit for a connyng · and a clene lyuyng.' 460

Then louh ther a lorde · and 'by this light!' seide,
 'Ich halde hit right and reson · to take of my reeue
 Al that myn auditour · other elles my stiwarde
 Conseileth me by here a-counte · and my clerkes wrytyng. 464
 With *spiritus intellectus* · thei toke the reeue-rolles,
 And with *spiritus fortitudinis* · fecche hit, wol he, nul he.'

Then cam ther a kyng · and by hus corone seide,
 'Ich am a kyng with corone · the comune to reule, 468
 And holychurch and clergie · fro corsede men to defenden.
 And yf me lacketh to lyue by · the lawe wol that ich take
 Ther ich may haue hit hastelokest · for ich am hefd of lawe,
 And ȝe ben bote membrys · and ich a-boue alle. 472

Sitthen ich am ȝoure alre hefd · ich am ȝoure alre hele,
 And holychurches chef help · and chefteyn of the comune.
 And what ich take of ȝow two · ich take hit at techyng

C. 442. be MFSGT; PE om. 443. suffreþ EMFGS; suffren P. 448.
 nywe P. *Et alibi* FS; PEMTG om. *et—retribuam* ST; PEMFG om. 450.
 he MSG; hym PEF. reccheþ MSFG; rekeþ PE. 453. þes (for þis) P.
 458. hem EMF; hym P. 459. a EMFSGT; P om. for MF; PESGT om.

Of *spiritus iusticie* · for I iugge ȝow alle;
 So I may baldely be houseled · for I borwe neuere, 472
 Ne craue of my comune · but as my kynde asketh.'

'In condicioun,' quod Conscience · 'that thow konne defende
 And rule thi rewme in resoun · riȝt wel, and in treuth,
 Take thow may in resoun · as thi lawe asketh; 476

Omnia tua sunt ad defendendum, set non ad depredandum!
 The vyker hadde fer home · and faire toke his leue,
 And I awakned there-with · and wrote as me mette.

PASSUS XX.

Passus xx^{us} de visione, et primus de Dobest.

THANNE as I went by the way · whan I was thus awaked,
 Heuy-chered I ȝede · and elyng in herte;
 I ne wiste where to ete · ne at what place.
 And it neighed nyeghe the none · and with Nede I mette, 4
 That afronted me foule · and faitour me called.

'Coudestow nouȝte excuse the · as dede the kynge and other,
 That thow toke to thi bylyf · to clothes and to sustenance,
 As by techynge and by tellynge · of *spiritus temperancie*, 8
 And thow nome namore · than Nede the tauȝte,
 And Nede ne hath no lawe · ne neure shal falle in dette?
 For thre thynges he taketh · his lyf forto saue, 11
 That is, mete, whan men hym werneth · and he no moneye weldeth,
 Ne wyght none wil ben his borwe · ne wedde hath none to legge.
 And he cauȝte in that cas · and come there-to by sleighte,
 He synneth nouȝte sothelich · that so wynneth his fode.
 And though he come so to a clothe · and can no better cheuysaunce,

Of *spiritus iusticie* · for ich Iugge 3ou alle ; 476
 So ich may baldely beo housled · for ich borwe neuere,
 Ne craue of my comune · bote as my kynde asketh.
 ‘In condicion,’ quath Conscience · ‘that thou conne defende
 And reule thy reame in reson · right wel, and in treuthe ; 480
 Than, that thou haue thyn askyng · as the lawe asketh ;
Omnia sunt tua ad defendendum, sed non ad deprehendendum !
 The vicory hadde fer hom · and faire tok hus leue,
 And ich a-wakede ther-with · and wrot as me mette.

Hic explicit passus primus de Dobest.

PASSUS XXIII.

Hic incipit passus secundus de Dobest.

AND as ich wente by the waye · when ich was thus awaked,
 Heuy-chered ich 3eode · and elyng in heorte ;
 For ich ne wiste wher to ete · ne in what place.
 And hit neyhede ny the noon · and with Neode ich mette, 4
 That afrontede me foule · and faitour me calde.
 ‘Couthest thou nat excuse the,’ he seide · ‘as dude the kyng
 and othere,
 That thou toke to lyue by · to sustinaunce and clothes,
 As by techinge and tellynge · of *spiritus temperancie*, 8
 And that thou nome no more · than Neode the tauhte?
 Neode hath no lawe · ne neuere shal falle in dette
 For thre thynges that he taketh · hus lyf for to saue ; 11
 That is, mete, whanne men hym werneth · for he no monye weldeth,
 And wot that non wol be hus borch · nother hath wed to legge.
 And he cacche in that cas · and come ther-to by sleithe,
 Sotheliche he syneweth nat · that so wynneth hus fode.
 And thauh he come so to a cloth · and can no betere cheuesaunce,

C. 476. Iugge MFST ; Iuge PG. 477. houslede P. 480 P om. 2nd in.
 482. vickery P ; see l. 411. 483. mette EMSGT ; mete P.

Passus XXIII. 1. awakede P. 2. chered EMFG ; chired P. 4. hit
 SM ; it FT ; PEG om. 12. werneþ EMFSGT ; wyneþ P. 16. P om. a.

Nede anon rizte · nymeth hym vnder meynpryse. 17
 And if hym lyst for to lape · the lawe of kynde wolde
 That he dronke at eche dicke · ar he for thurste deyde.
 So Nede, at grete nede · may nymen as for his owne, 20
 Wyth-oute conseil of Conscience · or cardynale vertues,
 So that he suwe and saue · *spiritus temperancie*.
 For is no vertue by fer · to *spiritus temperancie*,
 Neither *spiritus iusticie* · ne *spiritus fortitudinis*. 24
 For *spiritus fortitudinis* · forfaiteth ful oft,
 He shal do more than mesure · many tyme and ofte,
 And bete men ouer bitter · and somme of hem to litel,
 And greue men gretter · than goode faith it wolde. 28
 And *spiritus iusticie* · shal iuggen, wolhe, nolhe,
 After the kynges conseil · and the comune lyke.
 And *spiritus prudencie* · in many a poynte shal faille
 Of that he weneth wolde falle · if his wytte ne were. 32
 Wenynge is no wysdome · ne wyse ymagynacioun,
Homo proponit et deus disponit · and gouerneth alle good vertues.
 Ac Nede is next hym · for anon he meketh,
 And as low as a lombe · for lakkyng of that hym nedeth. 36

Wyse men forsoke wele · for they wolde be nedy,
 And woneden in wilderness · and wolde nouzte be riche.
 And god al his grete Ioye · gostliche he left,
 And cam and toke mankynde · and bycam nedy. 40
 So nedy he was, as seyth the boke · in many sondry places,
 That he seyde in his sorwe · on the selue rode,
 “Bothe fox and foule · may fleighe to hole and crepe,
 And the fische hath fyn · to flete with to reste, 44
 There nede hath ynome me · that I mote nede abyde,
 And suffre sorwes ful sowre · that shal to Ioye tourne.”
 For-thi be nouzte abasshed · to bydde and to be nedy;
 Syth he that wrouzte al the worlde · was wilfullich nedy, 48
 Ne neuer none so nedy · ne pouerere deyde.’

Whan Nede had vndernome me thus · anon I felle aslepe,

Neode nymeth hym a-non · vnder hus mayn-pryse. 17
 And ȝif hym lust for to lape · the lawe of kynde wolde
 That he dronk of eche a dicke · er he deide for therste.
 So Neode at grete neode · may nyme as for hus owene, 20
 With-oute consail of Conscience · or cardinale uertues,
 So that he suwe and saue · *spiritus temperancie*.
 For is no vertue by-fore · to *spiritus temperancie*,
 Nother *spiritus iusticie* · ne *spiritus fortitudinis*. 24
 For *spiritus fortitudinis* · forfeteth ful ofte,
 He shal do more than mesure · meny tyme and ofte,
 And bete men ouere bittere · and som body to lyte,
 And greue men grettour · than good faith wolde. 28
 And *spiritus iusticie* · shal Iugen, wol he, nul he,
 After the kynges counsaile · and the comune lyke.
 And *spiritus prudencie* · in menye poynt shal fayle
 Of that he weneth wolde falle · yf his wit ne were. 32
 Wenynge is no wisdomes · ne wys ymaginacion,
Homo proponit, deus disponit · god gouerneth alle goode vertues.
 Next hym is Neode · for a-non he meoketh,
 And is as loun as a lomb · for lackynge of that hym neodeth;
 For Neode maketh neody · for neode loun-herted. 37
 Filosofres for-soken welthe · for thei wolde be neody,
 And wonede wel elyngliche · and wolden nat be riche.
 And god al hus grete ioye · gostliche he leste, 40
 And cam and took man-kynde · and by-cam ful neody.
 He was so neody, seith the bok · in meny sondry places,
 That he seide in hus sorwe · on the selue rode,
 "Bothe fox and fowel · may fleo to hole and crepe, 44
 And the fische hath fynnes · to flete with to reste,
 Ther Neode hath ynome me so · that ich mot neode abyde,
 And suffre sorwes soure · that shal to ioye turne."
 For-thi beo nat a-basshed · to bydde and to beo neody, 48
 Sithe he that wrouhte al the worlde · was wilfulliche neody;
 Neuere non so neody · ne non so poure deyede.
 When Neode hadde vnder-nome me thus · a-non ich fel a-sleope,

C. 18. ȝif F; ȝeueþ (*wrongly*) PE. 27. bete EFST; beten M; bote P.
 34. The MSS. *erroneously place the words* good vertues *at the beginning of*
 l. 35. 36. þat hym GMFT; hym þat PES (*wrongly*). 46. abyde S;
 abide MFT; byde PE. 48. abaihshed P. 51. feol (*for fel*) P.

And mette ful merueillously · that, in mannes forme,
 Antecryst cam thanne · and al the croppe of treuthe 52
 Torned it vp so doune · and ouertilte the rote,
 And made fals sprynge and sprede · and spede mennes nedes;
 In eche a contre there he cam · he cutte away treuthe,
 And gert gyle growe there · as he a god were. 56
 Freres folwed that fende · for he ȝaf hem copes,
 And religiose reuerenced hym · and rongen here belles,
 And al the couent forth cam · to welcome that tyraunt,
 And alle hise, as wel as hym · saue onlich folis; 60
 Which folis were wel leuer · to deye than to lyue
 Lenger, siȝh leute · was so rebuked.
 And a fals fende Antecriste · ouer alle folke regned;
 And that were mylde men and holy · that no myschief dredden,
 Defyed al falsenesse · and folke that it vsed; 65
 And what kyng that hem confortd · knowynge hem any while,
 They cursed, and her conseil · were it clerke or lewed.
 Antecriste hadde thus sone · hundredes at his banere, 68
 And Pryde it bare · boldely aboute,
 With a lorde that lyueth · after lykyng of body,
 That cam aȝein Conscience · that kepere was and gyoure
 Ouer kynde Crystene · and cardynale vertues. 72
 'I conseil,' quod Conscience tho · 'cometh with me, ȝe foles,
 In-to Vnyte holy-cherche · and holde we vs there,
 And crye we to Kynde · that he come and defende vs,
 Foles, fro this fendes lymes · for Piers loue the Plowman. 76
 And crye we to alle the comune · that thei come to Vnite,
 And there abide and bikere · aȝein Beliales children.'
 Kynd Conscience tho herde · and cam out of the planetes,
 And sent forth his foreiours · feures and fluxes, 80
 Coughes, and cardiacles · crampes, and tothaches,
 Rewmes, and radegoundes · and roynouse scalles,
 Byles, and bocches · and brennyng agues;
 Frenesyas, and foule yueles · forageres of kynde, 84
 Hadde yprykked and prayed · polles of peple,

B. 54. made R; LWCOB *om.*
 RB; lenten LWCO.

62. Lenger WCOB; Lengore L. leute

And mette ful merueilousliche · that, in a mannes forme, 52
 Antecrist cam thenne · and al the crop of treuthe
 Turned tye vp-so-doun · and ouer-tilte the rote,
 And made fals to springe and sprede · and spede menne neodes;
 In eche contreie ther he cam · he cutte away treuthe, 56
 And gert gyle growe ther · as he a god were.
 Freres folweden that feonde · for he ȝaf hem copes,
 And religiose reuerencede hym · and rongen here belles;
 Al the couent tho cam · to welcome that tyraunt, 60
 And alle hise, as wel as hym · saue onliche fooles;
 The whiche fooles weren · gladdere to deye
 Than lyue lengoure, suthe leaute · was so rebuked.
 And a fals feond Anticrist · ouer alle folke regnede, 64
 That were mylde men and holye · that no meschief dradden,
 Defieden al falsnesse · and folk that hit vsede;
 And what kyng comfortede hem · knowynge here gyle,
 Thei corsede, and here consail · were hit clerk other lewede. 68
 Anticrist thus sone hadde · hundredes at hus baner,
 And Pruyde bar that baner · boldeliche aboute,
 With a lorde that lyueth · after lykyng of hus body,
 And cam a-ȝeyns Conscience · that keper was an gyour 72
 Ouer kynde Cristyne · and cardinale uertues.
 'Ich consail,' quath Conscience tho · 'cometh with me, ȝe fooles,
 In-to Unite holichurche · and halde we ous there.
 And crye we to Kynde · that he come and defende 76
 Ous fooles fro the feondes lymes · for Peers loue the Plouhman.
 And crye we on al the comune · that thei come to Unite,
 Ther to abyde and bykere · aȝeyns Beliales children.'
 Kynde huyrde tho Conscience · and cam out of the planetes,
 And sente forth his foreyours · feuers and fluxes, 81
 Couhes, and cardiacles · crampes, and toth-aches,
 Reumes, and radegoundes · and roynouse scabbes,
 Bules, and bocches · and brennyng aguwes; 84
 Frenesyas, and foule vueles · these foragers of kynde,
 Hadden pryked and preyed · polles of people;

C. 54. tilte MFT; tilt P. 55. spede MFST; spedde PE. 58. he
 EMFST; ȝe P. ȝaf EST; ȝaue P. 60. couant P. wolcome P. þat
 MFST; þe PE. 64. feon P; fend MT. 70. aboute P. 81. foreyours
 EF; fereours (for foreours) P. 82. crampes MIF; claumpes PE. 86.
 prykede P.

That largelich a legioun · lese her lyf sone.

There was—' harrow and help ! · here cometh Kynde,

With Deth that is dredful · to vndone vs alle !' 88

The lorde that lyued after lust · tho alowde cryde

After Conforte, a knyghte · to come and bere his banere.

' Al-arme ! alarme !' quod that lorde · ' eche lyf kepe his owne !' 92

And thanne mette this men · ar mynstralles myzte pipe,

And ar heraudes of armes · hadden descreued lordes. 93

Elde the hore · he was in the vauntwarde,

And bare the banere bifer Deth · by rizte he it claymed.

Kynde come after · with many kene sores, 96

As pokkes and pestilences · and moche poeple shente ;

So Kynde thorw corrupciouns · kulled ful manye.

Deth cam dryuende after · and al to doust passhed

Kynges and knyghtes · kayseres and popes ; 100

Lered ne lewed · he let no man stonde,

That he hitte euene · that euere stired after.

Many a louely lady · and lemmanes of knyghtes

Swouned and swelted · for sorwe of Dethes dyntes. 104

Conscience of his curteisye · to Kynde he bisouzte

To cesse and suffre · and see where thei wolde

Leue Pryde pryuely · and be parfite Cristene.

And Kynde cessed tho · to se the peple amende. 108

Fortune gan flateren thenne · tho fewe that were alyue,

And byhight hem longe lyf · and Lecherye he sent

Amonges al manere men · wedded and vnwedded,

And gadered a gret hoste · al agayne Conscience. 112

This Lecherye leyde on · with a laughyng chiere,

And with pryue speche · and peynted wordes,

And armed hym in ydelnesse · and in hiegh berynge.

He bare a bowe in his hande · and manye bloody arwes, 116

Weren fethered with faire biheste · and many a false truthe.

With his vntydy tales · he tened ful ofte

Conscience and his compaignye · of holicherche the techeres.

Thanne cam Coueityse · and caste how he myzte

120

Largeliche a legion · lees the lyf sone.
 Ther was—‘harow and help! · her cometh Kynde, 88
 With Deth that is dredful · to vn-do ous alle!’
 The lord that lyuede after lust · tho aloud criede
 After Comfort, a knyght · to come and bere hus baner.
 ‘Alarme! alarme!’ quath that lorde · ‘eche lyf kepe hus owene!’
 Thenne mette these men · er mynstrales myghte pipe, 93
 And er heraudes of armes · hadden discriued lordes.
 Elde the hore · was in the vaunt-warde,
 And bar the baner by-fore Deth · by right he hit claymede. 96
 Kynde cam after hym · with menye kynne sores,
 As pockes and pestilences · and mucche people shente;
 So Kynde thorgh corrupcions · culde ful menye.
 Deth cam dryuyng after · and al to douste paschte 100
 Kynges and knyghtes · cayzers and popes;
 Lered ne lewde · he lefte no man stande;
 That he hitte euene · sterede neuere after.
 Many a louely lady · and here lemmanes knyghtes 104
 Sounede and swelte · for sorwe of Dethes dyntes.
 Conscience of hus cortesie · tho Kynde he by-souhte
 To cessen and to suffren · and seo wher thei wolde
 Leue pruyde pryueliche · and beo parfit Cristene. 108
 And Kynde cessede tho · to seon the people amende.
 Fortune gan flaterie thenne · thaym fewe that were a-lyue,
 And by-hyght hem long lyf · and Lecherie he sente
 Amonges alle manere men · wedded and vnwedded, 112
 And gaderede a gret ost · al ageyn Conscience.
 This Lecherie leyde on · with lauhynge chere,
 And with pryuey speche · and peyntede wordes,
 And armede hym in ydelnesse · and in hy beryng. 116
 He bar a bowe in hus honde · and manye brode arwes,
 Were fetherede with faire by-hestes · and many a fals treuthe.
 With vntidy tales · he teonede ful ofte
 Conscience and hus companye · of holy churche the techers.
 Thenne cam Couetise · and caste how he myghte 121

C. 90. loust P. 94. discriuede P. 96. þe MFST; a PE. 100.
 dryuyng EMFS; dremend P. paschte FS; passhte T; paihste P. 104.
 louely EMFST; lofly P. 105. dyþes P. 111. hem MFST; hym PE.
 112. vnweddede P. 114. leyde MFST; leyden PE. chere MFST; chire P.
 116. in (1) EMFST; with P; see l. 123. 118. Where. 119. Whit P.

Ouercome Conscience · and cardynal vertues,
 And armed hym in auaryce · and hungriliche lyued.
 His wepne was al wiles · to wynnen and to hyden;
 With glosynges and with gabbynges · he gyled the peple. 124
 Symonye hym sente · to assaille Conscience,
 And preched to the peple · and prelates thei hem maden,
 To holden with Antecryste · her temperaltes to saue;
 And come to the kynges conseil · as a kene baroun, 128
 And kneled to Conscience · in courte afor hem alle,
 And gart Gode-Feith flee · and Fals to abide,
 And boldeliche bar adown · with many a bryte noble
 Moche of the witte and wisdom · of Westmynster halle. 132
 He Iugged til a Iustice · and Iusted in his ere,
 And ouertilte al his treuthe · with 'take-this-vp-amendement.'
 And to the arches in haste · he ȝede anone after,
 And torned ciuile in-to symonye · and sitthe he toke the official;
 For a mantel of menyuer · he made lele matrimonye 137
 Departen ar deth cam · and deuors shupte.

'Allas!' quod Conscience, and cried tho · 'wolde Criste, of
 his grace,

That Coueityse were Cristene · that is so kene a fizter, 140
 And bolde and bidyng; while his bagge lasteth!
 And thanne lowgh Lyf · and leet dagge his clothes,
 And armed hym in haste · in harlotes wordes,
 And helde Holynesse a Iape · and Hendenesse a wastour, 144
 And lete Leute a cherle · and Lye a fre man;
 Conscience and conseil · he counted it a folye.
 Thus relyed Lyf · for a litel fortune,
 And pryked forth with Pryde · preyseth he no vertue, 148
 Ne careth nouȝte how Kynde slow · and shal come atte laste,
 And culle alle erthely creatures · saue Conscience one.
 Lyf leep asyde · and lauȝte hym a lemman,
 'Heel and I,' quod he · 'and hieghnesse of herte 152
 Shal do the nouȝte drede · noyther Deth ne Elde,
 And to forȝete sorwe · and ȝyue nouȝte of synne.'
 This lyked Lyf · and his lemman Fortune,

B. 125. sent L. 137. mentel L. 138. deuors W; diuorce COB;
 deuos L. 149. Ne WR; He CO; A (sic) L. 150. creature L.

Ouercome Conscience · and cardinale uertues,
 And armed hym in auarice · and hungriliche lyuede.
 Hus wepne was al wiles · to wynne and to huyden; 124
 With glosynges and with gabbyngs · he gylede the peuple.
 Symonye hym sewede · to assaile Conscience,
 And pressede on the pope · and prelates thei maden,
 To holde with Antecrist · here temporalite to saue: 128
 And cam to kynges consail · as a kene baroun,
 And knockede Conscience · in court by-fore hem alle,
 And gerte Goode-Faith to flee · and Fals to a-byde,
 And baldeliche bar adoun · with meny a bryght noble 132
 Muche of the wit and wisdom · of Westmynster halle.
 He Iogged til a Iustice · and Iousted in hus ere,
 And ouertulte al hus treuthe · with 'tak-this-on-amendement.'
 And to the arches in haste · he hyede a-non after, 136
 And turnede cyuyle in-to symonye · and suth he tok the official;
 And for a menyuer mantel · he made leel matrimonye
 Departe er deth come · and a deuors shupte.

'Alas!' quath Conscience, and cride · 'wolde Crist, of hus
 grace, 140

That Couetise were Cristyne · that is so kene to fyghte,
 And bold and abydyng · the while hus bagge lasteth!
 And thanne lowh loude Lyf · and let dagge hus clothes,
 And armyd hym in haste · in harlotes wordes, 144
 And held Holynesse a lape · and Hendynesse a wastour,
 And let Leaute a cherl · and Lyere a freo man;
 Conscience and consail · he countede hit a folye.
 Thus relyede Lyf · for a litel fortune, 148
 And pryketh forth with Pruyde · preyseth he no vertue,
 Ne careth nouht hou Kynde slouh · and shal come atte laste,
 And culle alle erthly creatures · saue Conscience one.
 Lyf tho leep asyde · and lauhte hym a lemman, 152
 'Hele and ich,' quath he · 'and hihnesse of herte
 Shal do the nat drede · neither Deth ne Elde,
 And to for-ȝete ȝouthe · and ȝyue nauht of synne.'
 This likede Lyf · and Fortune hus lemman, 156

C. 125. Whith P. gabbynges P. gylede S; gilide T; giled EF; gyleþ P.
 126. sewede MFT; sywede P. 142. abydyng FS; byddyng P. þe MEF;
 þy P. 143. lohwh (for lowh) P. 146. chlerl P. 147. hit a S; it a F;
 hit ME; P om. 151. erthyly P. 155. to MFST; PE om. forȝute P.

And geten in her glorie · a gadelyng atte laste, 156
 One that moche wo wrouȝte · Sleuthe was his name.
 Sleuthe wex wonder ȝerne · and sone was of age,
 And wedded one Wanhope · a wenche of the stuwes;
 Her syre was a sysour · that neure swore treuthe, 160
 One Thomme Two-tonge · ateynte at vch a queste.
 This Sleuthe was war of werre · and a slynge made,
 And threwe drede of dyspayre · a dozein myle aboute.
 For care Conscience tho · cryed vpon Elde, 164
 And bad hym fonde to fyȝte · and afere Wanhope.

And Elde hent good hope · and hastilich he shifte hym,
 And wayued away Wanhope · and with Lyf he fyȝteth.
 And Lyf fleigh for fere · to Fysyke after helpe, 168
 And bisouȝte hym of socoure · and of his salue hadde,
 And gaf hym golde, good woon · that gladded his herte,
 And thei gyuen hym agayne · a glasen houue.
 Lyf leued that lechecrafte · lette shulde Elde, 172
 And dryuen away Deth · with dyas and dragges.

And Elde auntred hym on Lyf · and atte laste he hitte
 A fisicien with a forred hood · that he fel in a palsye,
 And there deyed that doctour · ar thre dayes after. 176
 'Now I see,' seyde Lyf · 'that surgerye ne fisyke
 May nouȝte a myte auaille · to medle aȝein Elde.'
 And in hope of his hele · gode herte he hente,
 And rode so to Reuel · a ryche place and a merye; 180
 The companye of conforte · men cleped it sumtyme.
 And Elde anone after me · and ouer myne heed ȝede,
 And made me balled bifore · and bare on the croune,
 So harde he ȝede ouer myn hed · it wil be seen eure. 184
 'Sire euel-ytauȝte Elde,' quod I · 'vnhende go with the!
 Sith whanne was the way · ouer mennes hedes?
 Haddestow be hende,' quod I · 'thow woldest haue asked leue!
 'ȝe! leue lordeyne!' quod he · and leyde on me with age, 188
 And hitte me vnder the ere · vnethe may ich here;

And geten in here glorie · a gadelyng atte laste,
 On that muche wo wrouhte · Sleuthe was hus name.
 Sleuthe ~~wax~~ wonder 3erne · and sone was of age,
 And wedded on Wanhope · a wenche of the stewes; 160
 Here syre was a sysour · that neuere swor treuthe,
 On Tomme Two-tounged · ateynt at eche enqueste.
 This Sleuthe was sleyh of werre · and a slynge made,
 And threw drede of dispayr · a doseyne myle a-boute. 164
 For care Conscience tho · cryede vp-on Elde,
 And bad hym fonde to fighte · and afere Wanhope.

And Elde hente good hope · and hastiliche shrof hym,
 And wayueth away Wanhope · and with Lyf he fighteth. 168
 And Lif fleyh for fere · to Fisik after helpe,
 And by-souhte hym of socour · and of his salue hadde,
 And gaf hym gold, good won · that gladede here hertes,
 And thei gauen hym agayn · a glasene houe. 172
 Lyf leyuede that leche-craft · lette sholde Elde,
 And to-dryue away Deth · with dyas and drogges.

Elde auntred hym on Lyf · and atte laste he hitte
 A fisician with a forrede hod · that he fel in a palsye, 176
 And ther deiede that doctour · er thre dayes after.
 'Now ich seo,' saide Lyf · 'that surgerye ne phisike
 May nat a myte auaile · to medlen a-3ens Elde.'
 And in hope of hus hele · good heorte he hente, 180
 And rod so to Reuel · a ryche place and a murye;
 The companye of comfort · men cleped hit som tyme.
 And Elde hastede after hym · and ouer my hefde 3eode,
 And made me balled by-fore · and bar on the croune; 184
 So harde he 3eode ouer myn hefde · hit wol be sene euere.
 'Syre vuel-ytauht Elde,' quath ich · 'vnhende go with the!
 Suththe whanne was the hey wey · ouer menne hefdes?
 Haddest thou be hende,' quath ich · 'thow woldest haue asked
 leue!' 188
 '3e! leue lordeyn!' quath he · and leyde on me with age,
 And hitte me vnder the ere · vnnethe may ich huyre.

C. 160. stywes P. 162. tomme MFS; Robert P. 163. Thes (*for*
 This) P. 164. prewe P. 165. þo MFT; PES *om.* 169. fleyht (*for*
 fleyh) P. fisik EMST; syke (*sic*) P. 170. his MFST; here PE. 171.
 goud P. 172. gauyn P. 174. dyas and FS; dias and M; *miswritten*
 dayes P. 182. clipid P. 184. ballide PT. 185. sene EMFST; syne P.
 186. ytauhte P. 190. vnnype P.

He buffeted me aboute the mouthe · and bette out my tethe,
 And gyued me in goutes · I may nouȝte go at large. ·
 And of the wo that I was in · my wyf had reuthe, 192
 And wissched ful witterly · that I were in heuene.
 For the lyme that she loued me fore · and leef was to fele,
 On nyȝtes namely · whan we naked were,
 I ne myght in no manere · maken it at hir wille, 196
 So Elde and she sothly · hadden it forbeten.

And as I seet in this sorwe · I say how Kynde passed,
 And Deth drowgh niegh me · for drede gan I quake,
 And cried to Kynde · out of care me brynge. 200
 ‘Loo! Elde the hoore · hath me biseye,
 Awreke me, if ȝowre wille be · for I wolde ben hennes.’
 ‘ȝif thou wilt ben ywroken · wende in-to Vnite,
 And holde the there eure · tyl I sende for the, 204
 And loke thou conne somme crafte · ar thou come thennes.’
 ‘Conseille me, Kynde,’ quod I · ‘what crafte is best to lerne?’

‘Lerne to loue,’ quod Kynde · ‘and leue of alle othre.’
 ‘How shal I come to catel so · to clothe me and to fede?’ 208
 ‘And thou loue lelly,’ quod he · ‘lakke shal the neure
 Mete ne worldly wede · whil thi lyf lasteth.’
 And there, by conseil of Kynde · I comsed to rowme
 Thorw Contricioun and Confessioun · tyl I cam to Vnite; 212
 And there was Conscience constable · Cristene to saue,
 And biseged sothly · with seuene grete gyauntz,
 That with Antecrist helden · hard aȝein Conscience.

Sleuth with his slynge · an hard saut he made, 216
 Proude prestes come with hym · moo than a thousand,
 In paltokes and pyked shoes · and pisseres longe knyues,
 Comen aȝein Conscience; · with Coueityse thei helden.
 ‘By Marie,’ quod a mansed preste · of the marche of Yrlonde,

‘I counte namore Conscience · bi so I cacche syluer, 221
 Than I do to drynke · a drauȝte of good ale!’

He boffatede me a-boute the mouthe · and bete oute my wang-
teth,

And gyuede me with goutes · ich may nat go at large. 192

And of the wo that ich was yn · my wif hadde reuthe,

And wisshede wel witerlyche · that ich were in heuene.

For the lyme that she louede me for · and leef was to feele,

And a nyghtes nameliche · when we naked were, 196

Ich ne myghte in none manere · maken hit at heore wille,

So Elde and hue hit hadde · a-feynted and forbete.

And as ich sat in this sorwe · ich sauh how Kynde passede,

And Deth drow neyghynge me · for drede gan ich quaken, 200

And criede carfully to Kynde · out of kare me brynge.

'Lo, hou Elde the hore · hath me byseye;

Awreke me, yf 3oure wil beo · for ich wolde be hennes.'

'Yf thou wolt beo awreke · wende in-to Unite, 204

And hold the thare euere · til ich sende for the,

And loke thou conne som craft · er thou come thennes.'

'Consailleth me, Kynde,' quath ich · 'what crafte be best to
leere?'

'Lerne to loue,' quath Kynde · 'and lef alle other thynges.' 208

'Hou shal ich come to catel so · to clothe me and to feode?'

'And thou loue leelliche · lacke shal the neuere

Wede ne worldlich mete · while thy lyf lasteth.'

And ich thorgh consail of Kynde · comsede to rome 212

Thorgh Contricion and Confession · til ich cam to Unite;

And ther was Conscience constable · Crystine to saue.

He was byseged sothliche · with seuene grete geauntes,

That with Antecrist helden · harde a3eyns Conscience. 216

Sleuthe with hus slynge · an hard saut he made.

Proude preostes cam with hym · passend an hundred;

In paltokes and pikede shoes · and pissares longe knyues,

Thei come a3eyns Conscience; · with Couetise thei helden. 220

'By the Marie,' quath a mansed preest · was of the marche of
Yrelonde,

'Ich counte Conscience no more · by so ich cacche seluer,

Than ich do to drynke · a drawt of good ale!'

C. 194. whiterlyche P. 195. þat MFS; PE *om.* fore P. 196.
nygh3tes P. 198. hue S; heo MF; he P. a-feyntede P. 199. ich E;
y S; i FT; P *om.* 201. P *om.* out. 211. wordliche P. 215. bysegide P.
216. Aunticrist PS. 217. saut EFST; saht P. 221. mansede P.

And so seide sixty · of the same contreye ;
 And shoten aȝein with shotte · many a shef of othes ; 224
 And brode hoked arwes · goddes herte, and his nayles,
 And hadden almost Vnyte · and holynesse adowne.

Conscience cryed, 'helpe · Clergye, or ellis I falle
 Thorw inparfit prestes · and prelates of holicherche.' 228

Freres herden hym crye · and comen hym to helpe,
 Ac for thei couth nouȝte wel her craft · Conscience forsoke hem.
 Nede neghed tho nere · and Conscience he tolde

That thei come for coueityse · to haue cure of soules— 232

'And for thei arn poure, par auenture · for patrimoigne hem failleth,
 Thei wil flatre, to fare wel · folke that ben riche ;

And sithen thei chosen chele · and cheytif pouerte,
 Lat hem chewe as thei chese · and charge hem with no cure !
 For lomer he lyeth · that lyflode mote begge, 237

Than he that laboureth for lyflode · and leneth it beggeres.

And sithen freres forsoke · the felicite of erthe,
 Lat hem be as beggeres · or lyue by angeles fode !' 240

Conscience of this conseilte tho · comsed forto laughe,
 And curteislich confortd hem · and called in alle freres,
 And seide, 'sires, sothly · welcome be ȝe alle
 To Vnite and holicherche · ac on thyng I ȝow preye, 244
 Holdeth ȝow in Vnyte · and haueth none envye

To lered ne to lewed · but lyueth after ȝowre rewle.
 And I wil be ȝowre borghe · ȝe shal haue bred and clothes,
 And other necessities i-nowe · ȝow shal no thyng faille, 248

With that ȝe leue logyk · and lerneth for to louye.
 For loue laft thei lordship · bothe londe and scole,
 Frere Fraunceys and Dominyk · for loue to ben holy.

And if ȝe coueyteth cure · Kynde wil ȝow teche, 252
 That in mesure god made · alle manere thynges,

And sette hem at a certeyne · and at a syker noumbre,
 And nempned names newe · and noumbred the sterres ;

*Qui numerat multitudinem stellarum, et omnibus eis nomina
 [vocat], etc.*

Kynges and knyghtes · that kepen and defenden, 256

B. 235. cheytifte LR ; cheitif C ; chaytijf O. 242. curtellich L. 248.
 I-nowe R ; I-now C ; ynowe WOB ; anowe L. 254. hem W ; it LCROB.
 255. nomina CB ; LWRO om. vocat is not in the MSS.

And so seide syxty · of the same countreo; 224

And shotten aȝeyns hym with shot · many a schef of othes,

And brode-hokede arwes · godes herte, and hus nailes,

And hadde almost Vnite · and holychurche a-doune.

Conscience cride, ‘helpe · Cleregie, other ich falle 228

Thorgh imparfit preestes · and prelates of holychurche.’

Freres herde hym crie · and comen hym to helpe,

Ac for thei couthe nat wel here craft · Conscience for-soke hem.

Neode neyhede tho ner · to Conscience he tolde 232

That thei came for couetise · to haue cure of soules—

‘And for thei aren poure, paraunter · for patrimonye hem failleth,

Thei wolde flaterie to fare wel · to folke that ben riche.

And sitthen thei chosen chile · and chaytif pouerte, 236

Let hem chewe as thei chosen · and charge hem with no cure!

For lommere he lyeth · that liflode mote begge,

Than he that laboreth for lyflode · and leneth hit beggeres.

And sitthen freres for-soke · the felicite of erthe, 240

Lat hem be as beggers · other lyue by aungeles fode!’

Conscience of this consail tho · comsede for to lauhe,

And cortesly confortid hem · and cald yn alle freres,

And seide, ‘sires, sothly · wel-come be ȝe alle 244

To Unite and to holichurche · ac o thing ich ȝow preye,

Holdeth ȝow in Unite · and haueth non enuye

To lerede ne to lewide · bote lyueth after ȝoure reule.

And ich wol beo ȝoure borw · ȝe shulleth haue brede and
clothes, 248

And other necessities ynowh · ȝou shal no thyng lakke,

With that ȝe leue logyk · and lerneth for to louye.

For loue lefte thei lordshupes · bothe londe and scole,

Frere Fraunceis and Domynyk · for loue to be holy. 252

And yf ȝe coueiteth cure · Kynde wol ȝow telle,

That in mesure god made · alle manere thynges,

And sette hit at a sertayn · and at a syker nombre,

And nempnede hem names · and nombrede the sterres; 256

Qui numerat multitudinem stellarum.

Kynges and knyghtes · that kepen and defenden,

C. 225. many—of EF; many a schef S; many shuf of T; mony shuf P.

226. harwes P; see l. 117. 236. chaitife M; chaitif T; cheityf S; caytif PE.

250. lernyep P. 253. ȝe EMFST; he P. 255. a (1) EMFT; PS om.

Han officers vnder hem · and vch of hem certeyne;
 And if thei wage men to werre · thei write hem in noumbre,
 Or wil no tresorere hem paye · trauaille thei neure so sore.
 Alle other in bataille · ben yholde bribours, 260
 Pilours and pykehernois · in eche a place ycursed.
 Monkes and monyals · and alle men of religioun
 Her ordre and her reule wil · to han a certeyne noumbre.
 Of lewed and of lered · the lawe wol and axeth 264
 A certeyn for a certeyne · saue onelich of freres!
 For-thi,' quod Conscience, 'by Cryst · kynde witte me telleth,
 It is wikked to wage ȝow · ȝe wexeth out of noumbre!
 Heuene hath euene noumbre · and helle is with-out noumbre;
 For-thi I wolde witterly · that ȝe were in the registre, 269
 And ȝowre noumbre vndre notaries sygne · and noyther mo ne
 lasse!'

Enuye herd this · and heet freres to go to scole,
 And lerne logyk and lawe · and eke contemplacioun, 272
 And preche men of Plato · and preue it by Seneca,
 That alle thinges vnder heuene · ouȝte to ben in comune.

And ȝit he lyeth, as I leue · that to the lewed so precheth,
 For god made to men a lawe · and Moyses it tauȝte, 276

Non concupisces rem proximi tui.

And euele is this yholde · in parisches of Engelande,
 For persones and parishprestes · that shulde the peple shryue,
 Ben curatoures called · to knowe and to hele,
 Alle that ben her parisshiens · penaunce to enioigne, 280
 And shulden be ashamed in her shrifte; · ac shame maketh hem
 wende,

And fleen to the freres · as fals folke to Westmynstre,
 That borweth and bereth it thider · and thanne biddeth frendes
 ȝerne of forȝifnesse · or lenger ȝeres lone. 284

Ac whil he is in Westmynstre · he wil be bifore,
 And make hym merye · with other mennes goodis.
 And so it fareth with moche folke · that to the freres shryueth,
 As sysours and excecuteurs · thei wil ȝyue the freres 288

B. 259. LWCROB omit Or, but Crowley retains it. WOB surmount the difficulty by placing l. 259 after l. 261. 270. notaries WCOB; notarie L.
 284. lone O; loone WC; lene (or leue?) LR. 288. ȝyue ȝe WRO; ȝeue ȝe B; ȝe (with ue above) L.

Hauen officers vnder hem · and ech of hem a certayn ; 258
 And yf thei wage men to werre · thei wryten hem in nombre ;
 Wol no treserour take hem wages · trauayle thei neuere so sore,
 Bote hij beon nempned in the nombre · of hem that ben ywaged.
 Alle othere in bataille · beeth yholde brybours,
 Pilours and pyke-herneys · in eche parshe a-corsede.
 Monekes and monyales · and alle men of religion, 264
 Here ordre and here ruele wol · to haue a certayn nombre.
 Of lered and lewede · the lawe wole and asketh
 A certayn for a certayn · saue onliche of freres !
 For-thi,' quath Conscience, 'by Crist · kynde wit me telleth, 268
 Hit is wickede to wage 3ou · 3e wexeth oute of nombre !
 Heuene haueth euene nombre · and helle is with-oute nombre ;
 For-thi ich wolde witerly · that 3e were in registre,
 And 3oure nombre vnder notarie signe · and nother more ne lasse !'
 Enuye herde this · and het freres go to scole, 273
 And lerne logik and lawe · and eke contemplacion,
 And preche men of Plato · and prouen hit by Seneca,
 That alle thyng vnder heuene · ouhte to beo in comune. 276
 He lyeth, as ich leyue · that to the lewede so precheth,
 For god made to men a lawe · and Moyses hit tauhte,
Non concupisces rem proximi tui.
 And vuel is this yholde · in parshes of Yngelonde,
 For persones and parshe-preestes · that sholde the peuple shryue,
 And thei beon curatours cald · to knowe and to hele, 281
 Alle that been here parshenes · penaunces to enioyne,
 And beo ashamede in here shryft ; · ac shame maketh hem
 wende,
 And fleo to the freres · as fals folke to Westmynstre, 284
 That borweth and bereth hit thudet · and thenne byddeth frendes
 3eorne of for-3euenesse · other lenger 3eres leue.
 Ac while he is in Westmynstre · he wol be by-fore,
 And maken hym myrie · with other menne goodes. 288
 And so hit fareth by muche folke · that to freres hem shryueth,
 As asisours and executours · thei shal 3eue the freres

C. 262. yholde EST ; yolde P. 269. wexep EFM ; wexip T ; wexit P.
 271. whiterly P. 282. to enioyne MFS ; enioyne T ; enioyneþ P. 284.
 þe EMST ; P om. 290. asisours ES ; asissours P ; sisours MFT. excec-
 tours P.

A parcel to preye for hem · and make hem-self myrre
 With the residue and the remenaunt · that other men biswonke,
 And suffre the ded in dette · to the day of dome.

Enuye herfore · hated Conscience, 292
 And freres to filosofye · he fonde hem to scole,
 The while Coueytise and Vnkyndenesse · Conscience assailed.
 In Vnite holycherche · Conscience helde hym,
 And made Pees porter · to pynne the 3ates 296
 Of alle taletellers · and tyterers in ydel.
 Ypocrisye and he · an hard saut thei made.
 Ypocrysie atte 3ate · hard gan fizte,
 And wounded wel wykkedly · many a wise techen, 300
 That with Conscience acorded · and cardinale vertues.
 Conscience called a leche · that coude wel shryue,
 'Go salue tho that syke ben · and thorw synne ywounded.'
 Shrifte shope sharpe salue · and made men do penaunce 304
 For her mysdedes · that thei wrou3te hadden,
 And that Piers were payed · *redde quod debes*.

Somme lyked nou3te this leche · and lettres thei sent,
 3if any surgien were in the sege · that softer couth plastre. 308
 Sire Lief-to-lyue-in-leccherye · lay there and groned;
 For fastyng of a Fryday · he ferde as he wolde deye.
 'Ther is a surgiene in this sege · that softe can handle,
 And more of phisyke bi fer · and fairer he plastreth; 312
 One frere Flaterere · is phisiciene and surgiene.'
 Quod Contricioun to Conscience · 'do hym come to Vnyte,
 For here is many a man · herte thorw Ypocrisie.'

'We han no nede,' quod Conscience · 'I wote no better leche 314
 Than persoun or parisshe-prest · penytancere or bisshop, 317
 Saue Piers the Plowman · that hath powere ouer hem alle,
 And indulgence may do · but if dette lette it.
 I may wel suffre,' seyde Conscience · 'syn 3e desiren, 320
 That frere Flaterer be fette · and phisike 3ow syke.'

The freire her-of herde · and hyed faste
 To a lorde for a lettre · leue to haue to curen,
 As a curatour he were · and cam with his lettres 324

B. 300. a WRB; LCO om. 303. and WR; LCOB om. 308. in R;
 LWCOB om.; see l. 311. 311. softe WRCOB; soft L.

A parcel to preye for hem · and maken hem murye
 With the remenant of the good · that other men byswonke, 292
 And suffre the dede in dette · to the day of dome.

Enuye here-fore · hatyde Conscience,
 And freres to philosophie · he fond hem to scole,
 'The while Couetise and Vnkyndenesse · assailede Conscience.
 In Vnite holichurche · Conscience held hym, 297
 And made Pees portor · to pynne the 3ates.
 Alle tale-tellours · and titereres in ydel,
 Ypocrise and thei · an hard saut thei 3euen. 300
 Ypocrise at the 3ate · harde gan fighte,
 And wondede wel wickedly · meny a wys techere,
 That with Conscience acordede · and cardinale uertues.
 Conscience calde a leche · that couthe wel shryue, 304
 To salue tho that sik were · and thorgh synne y-wonded.
 Shruft shupte sharpe salue · and made men do penaunce
 For here mysdedes · that thei wrouht hadde,
 And that Peers pardoun were ypaied · *redde quod debes.* 308

Some likede nat this leche · and lettres thei senten,
 Yf eny surgeyn were in the sege · that softere couthe plastre.
 Sire Lyf-to-lyue-in-lecherie · lay there and groned;
 For fastynge of a Friday · he ferde as he wolde deye. 312
 'Ther is a surgen in the sege · that softe can handle,
 And more of fisik by fer · and fairer he plastreth;
 On frere Flaterere · is fisician and surgien.'
 Quath Contricion to Conscience · 'do hym come to Unite, 316
 For her is meny man · hurt thorgh Ypocrisye.'
 'We haue no neode,' quath Conscience · 'ich wote no bettere
 leche

Than person other parshe-prest · penytancer other busshup,
 Saue Peers the Plouhman · that hath powere ouere alle, 320
 And indulgence may do · bote yf dette lette.
 Ich may wel suffry,' quath Conscience · 'sutthe 3e desiren
 That frere Flaterere be fet · and fysyke 3ou syke.'

The frere here-of herde · and hyede faste 324
 To a lorde for a lettere · leue to haue to curen
 As he a curatour were · and cam with hus letteres

C. 291. prarcel (*sic*) P. murye T; murie M; merye FS; murpe P. 300.
 and (*for an*) P. saut ST; sawt F; swat (*sic*) PE. 314. fer MFT; feer P.
 322. disyren P.

Baldly to the bisshop · and his brief hadde,
 In contrees there he come in · confessiouns to here;
 And cam there Conscience was · and knocked atte 3ate.
 Pees vnpynned it · was porter of Vnyte, 328
 And in haste asked · ‘what his wille were?’
 ‘In faith,’ quod this frere · ‘for profit and for helthe
 Carpe I wolde with Contricioun · and therefore come I hider.’

‘He is sike,’ seide Pees · ‘and so ar many other, 332
 Ypocrisie hath herte hem · ful harde is if thei keure.’
 ‘I am a surgien,’ seide the segge · ‘and salues can make;
 Conscience knoweth me wel · and what I can do bothe.’
 ‘I preye the,’ quod Pees tho · ‘ar thow passe ferther, 336
 What hattestow? I preye the · hele nouzte thi name.’
 ‘Certes,’ seyde his fellow · ‘sire *Penetrans-domos*.’
 ‘3e, go thi gate,’ quod Pees · ‘bi god, for al thi phisyk,
 But thow conne somme crafte · thow comest nouzt her-inne!
 I knewe such one ones · nouzte eighte wynter passed, 341
 Come in thus ycoped · at a courte there I dwelt,
 And was my lordes leche · and my ladyes bothe.
 And at the last this limitour · tho my lorde was out, 344
 He salued so owre wommen · til somme were with childe!’
 Hende-speche het Pees · opene the 3ates—
 ‘Late in the frere and his felawe · and make hem faire chere.
 He may se and here · so it may bifalle, 348
 That Lyf thorw his lore · shal leue Coueityse,
 And be adradde of Deth · and with-drawe hym fram Pryde,
 And acorde with Conscience · and kisse her either other.’

Thus thorw Hende-speche · entred the frere, 352
 And cam in-to Conscience · and curteisly hym grette.
 ‘Thow art welcome,’ quod Conscience · ‘canstow hele the syke?
 Here is Contricioun,’ quod Conscience · ‘my cosyn, ywounded;
 Conforte hym,’ quod Conscience · ‘and take kepe to his sores.
 The plastres of the persoun · and poudres biten to sore, 357

Baldely to the bushope · and hus breef hadde,
 In countreyes ther he cam · confessions to hure; 328
 And cam ther Conscience was · and knockede atte ȝate.
 Pees vnpynned the dore · that was portour of Vnite,
 And in hast he askede · ‘what hus wil were?’
 ‘In faith,’ quath this frere · ‘for profit and for helthe, 332
 Carpe ich wolde with Contricion · and ther-fore cam ich
 hyder.’
 ‘He is syke,’ seide Pees · ‘and so aren meny othere;
 Ypocrisye hath hurt hem · ful hard is yf thei keuere.’
 ‘Ich am a surgen,’ seide the frere · ‘and salues can ich make,
 Conscience knoweth me wel · and what ich can don.’ 337
 ‘Ich preye the,’ quath Pees tho · ‘er thou passe forthere,
 What hattest thou? ich praye the · hele nat thy name.’
 ‘Certes,’ seide his felawe · ‘syre *Penetrans-domos*.’ 340
 ‘Ȝe, go thi gate,’ quath Pees · ‘by god, for al thy fysike,
 Bote thou conne other craft · thou comest nat here-ynne!
 Ich knew such on ones · nat eyhte wynter passede,
 Cam yn thus y-coped · at a court there ich dwellede. 344
 He was my lordes leche · and my ladies bothe,
 And atte last this lymytour · tho my lord was oute,
 He saluede so oure wommen · til somme were with childe!’
 Hende-speche het Pees tho · opene the ȝates— 348
 ‘Lat yn the frere and hus felawe · and make hem faire chere.
 He may seo and huyre here · so may by-falle,
 That Lyf thorgh hus lore · shal leue Couetise, 351
 And to beo a-drad of Deth · and with-drawe hym fro Pruyde,
 And acorde with Conscience · and cusse here aither othere.’
 Thus thorgh Hende-speche · entrede the frere,
 And cam to Conscience · and corteisliche hym grette. 355
 ‘Thou art welcome,’ quath Conscience · ‘canst thou hele syke?
 Here is Contricion,’ quath Conscience · ‘my cosyn, ywonded;
 Conforte hym,’ quath Conscience · ‘and take kepe to hus sores.
 The plastres of the person · and the pouderes beoth to sore,

O. 331. askede MF; asked E; hesshede P. 335. þei EMFT; þey S;
miswritten ȝe P. 337. done P. 339. þe EF; PMST *om.* 340. is
 (*for his*) P. 342. oþer MFS; any oþer E; eny PT. 344. y-coped P.
 346. atte þe P. whas P. 347. where P. 349. And lat PE; *but* MFST
omit And. chere EMFST; chyre P. 356. art MFST; ert PE. wolcome P.
 357. ywondede P.

He lat hem ligge ouerlonge · and loth is to chaunge hem;
 Fro lenten to lenten · he lat his plastres bite.'

'That is ouerlonge,' quod this limitour · 'I leue I shal amende
 it;—' 360

And goth and gropeth Contricioun · and gaf hym a plastre
 Of 'a pryue payement · and I shal praye for ȝow,
 For alle that ȝe ben holde to · al my lyf-tyme,
 And make ȝow, my lady · in masse and in matynes, 364
 As freres of owre fraternite · for a litel syluer.'

Thus he goth and gadereth · and gloseth there he shryueth,
 Tyl Contricioun hadde clene forȝeten · to crye and to wepe,
 And wake for his wykked werkes · as he was wont to done. 368
 For confort of his confessour · Contricioun he lafte,
 That is the souereynest salue · for alkyn synnes.

Sleuth seigh that · and so did Pryde,
 And come with a kene wille · Conscience to assaille. 372
 Conscience cryde eft · and bad Clergye help hym,
 And also Contricioun · forto kepe the ȝate.

'He lith and dremeth,' seyde Pees · 'and so do many other;
 The frere with his phisik · this folke hath enchaunted, 376
 And plastred hem so esyly · thei drede no synne.'

'Bi Cryste,' quod Conscience tho · 'I wil bicomme a pilgryme,
 And walken as wyde · as al the worlde lasteth,
 To seke Piers the Plowman · that Pryde may destruye, 380
 And that freres hadde a fyndyng · that for nede flateren,
 And contrepleteth me, Conscience; · now Kynde me auenge,
 And sende me happe and hele · til I haue Piers the Plowman!
 And sitthe he gradde after grace · til I gan awake. 384

Explicit hic dialogus Petri Plowman.

And lat hem lygge ouer-lange · and loth is to chaungen; 360
Fro lente to lente · he let hus plastres byte.'

'That is ouerlonge,' quath this lymytour · 'ich leyue ich shal
amende hit.'

He goth and gropeth Contrition · and gaf hym a plastre
Of 'a pryue payement · and ich shal preye for 3ow, 364
And for hem that 3e aren holden to · al my lyf-tyme,
And make 3ow, my lady · in masse and in matynes,
As freres of oure fraternite · for a litel seluer.'

Thus he goth and gadereth · and gloseth ther he shryueth, 368
Til Contrition hadde clene for-3ute · to crie and wepe and wake
For hus wickede werkes · as he was woned by-fore.

For comfort of hus confessour · Contricion he lefte,
That is the souereyne salue · for alle kynne synnes. 372

Anon Sleuthe seih that · and so dude Pruyde,
And comen with a kene wil · Conscience to assaile.
Conscience criede eft · 'Cleregie, come help me!'
And bad Contricion to come · to helpe kepe the 3ate. 376

'He lith adreynt,' saide Pees · 'and so doth meny othere;
The frere with hus fisik · this folke hath enchaunted,
And doth men drynke dwale · that men dredeth no synne.'
'By Crist,' quath Conscience tho · 'ich wol by-come a pilgryme,
And wenden as wide · as the worlde regneth, 381

To seke Peers the Plouhman · that Pruyde myghte destruye,
And that freres hadden a fyndynge · that for neode flateren,
And counterpleideth me, Conscience; · nowe Kynde me a-venge,
And sende me hap and hele · til ich haue Peers Plouhman!'
And suthe he gradde after grace · til ich gan a-wake. 386

Hic explicit passus secundus de Dobest.

Explicit Peeres Plouhman.

O. 361. byte T; bite EMF; byde PS. 362. lymytour EFT; lymatour P.
363. and (1) EFS; PMT om. 364. 3owe P. 370. wonede P. 376. kepe
EMST; P om. 377. adreynt EMF; adreynched P. 378. enchauntede P.
381. wordle P. 383. 3at (1) EMFST; 3e P.

RICHARD THE REDELESS.

Prologus.

AND as I passid in my preiere · ther prestis were at messe,
In a blessid borugh · that Bristow is named,
In a temple of the trinite · the toun euen amyddis,
That Cristis chirche is cleped · amonge the comune peple, 4
Sodeynly ther sourdid · selcouthe thingis,
A grett wondir to wyse men · as it well myȝth,
And dowtes ffor to deme · ffor drede comynge after.
So sore were the sawis · of bothe two sidis, 8
Of Richard that regned · so riche and so noble,
That whyle he werrid be west · on the wilde Yrisshe,
Henrri was entrid · on the est half,
Whom all the londe loued · in lengthe and in brede, 12
And ros with him rapely · to riztyn his wronge,
ffor he shulde hem serue · of the same after.
Thus tales me troblid · ffor they trewe were,
And amarride my mynde rith moche · and my wittis eke: 16
ffor it passid my parceit · and my preifis also,
How so wondirffull werkis · wolde haue an ende..
But in sothe whan they sembled · some dede repente,
As knowyn is in cumpas · of Cristen londis, 20
That rewthe was, if reson · ne had reffourmed
The myssecheff and the mysserule · that men tho in endurid.
I had pete of his passion · that prince was of Walis,
And eke oure crouned kynge · till Crist woll no lenger; 24
And as a lord to his liage · thouȝ I lite hade,
All myn hoole herte was his · while he in helthe regnid.

10. MS. wyle.

12. Cf. He had be lord of þat londe · in lengthe and in brede; C. 4. 261.

13. Cf. Two *rysen rapliche* · and rounede to-geders; C. 7. 383. MS. rosse
(for ros).

15. MS. where.

22. For endurid, read durede.

And ffor I wuste not witterly · what shulde ffall,
 Whedir god wolde ȝeue him grace · sone to amende, 28
 To be oure gioure aȝeyn · or graunte it another,
 This made me to muse · many tyme and ofte,
 For to written him a writte · to wissen him better,
 And to meue him of mysserewle · his mynde to reffresshe, 32
 ffor to preise the prynce · that paradise made,
 To ffullfill him with ffeith · and ffortune aboue,
 And not to grucchen a grott · aȝeine godis sonde,
 But mekely to suffre · what so him sente were. 36
 And ȝif him list to loke · a leef other tweyne,
 That made is to mende him · of his myssededis,
 And to kepe him in confforte · in Crist and nouȝt ellis,
 I wolde be gladde that his gost · myȝte glade be my wordis, 40
 And grame if it greued him · be god that me bouȝte!
 Ther nys no gouernour on the grounde · ne sholde gye him
 the better—

And euery Cristen kyng · that ony croune bereth,
 So he were lerned on the langage · my lyff durst I wedde—
 ȝif he waite well the wordis · and so werche therafter; 45
 ffor all is tresour of the trinite · that turneth men to gode.
 And as my body and my beste · ouȝte to be my liegis,
 So rithffully be reson · my rede shulde also, 48
 ffor to conceill, and I couthe · my kyng and the lordis;
 And ther-ffor I fflondyd · with all my ffyue wyttis
 To traueile on this tretis · to teche men ther-after
 To be war of wylffulnesse · lest wondris arise. 52
 And if it happe to ȝoure honde · beholde the book onys,

27. MS. wost; *but see* Pass. i. ll. 49 and 64, *below*.

30. Cf. *Musynge* on þis meteles · a myle-wey ich ȝeode;

And *meny tymes* this meteles · *made me* to studie; C. 10. 296.

35. Cf. On *god*, whenne me greued ouht · and *grucched of his sonde*;

C. 7. 111.

37. Cf. First I lerned to lye · *a leef other tweyne*; B. 5. 203.

43. MS. grounde (*an obvious error for croune; copied from l. 42*).

44. Cf. Ich dorst haue *leid my lyue* · and no lasse *wedde*; C. 4. 260.

46. Cf. Ther treuthe is, þe trone · þat *trinite* ynne sitteþ . .

Than treuthe & trewe loue · ys no *tresour* bettere; C. 2. 134-136.

47. MS. oute.

48. Cf. —*bi Reson*, And *Rihtfuliche*, &c.; A. 1. 92, 93; also, For *ryhtfulliche reson*; C. 2. 50.

49. MS. couȝthe.

50. For fflondyd, MS. has flordyd, altered to fflondyd. Mr. Wright prints flordyd, *but see* B. 15. 327; and cf. C. 2. 15.

And redeth on him redely · rewis an hundrid,
 And if 3e sauere sum dell · se it fforth ouere,
 ffor reson is no repreff · be the rode of Chester! 56
 And if 3e ffynde ffables · or ffoly ther-amonge,
 Or ony ffantasie yffeyned · that no ffrute is in,
 Lete 3oure conceill corette it · and clerkis to-gedyr,
 And amende that ys amysse · and make it more better: 60
 ffor 3it it is secrette · and so it shall lenger,
 Tyll wyser wittis · han waytid it ouere,
 That it be lore laweffull · and lusty to here.
 ffor witterly, my will is · that it well liked 64
 3ou and all 3ouris · and yonge men leueste,
 To be-nyme hem her noyes · that neweth hem ofte.
 ffor and they mvse theron · to the myddwardis,
 They shall fynde ffele ffawtis · ffoure score and odde, 68
 That youghthe weneth alwey · that it be witte euere.
 And thou3 that elde opyn it · other-while amonge,
 And poure on it preuylly · and preue it well after,
 And constrewe ich clause · with the *culorum*, 72
 It shulde not apeire hem a peere · a prynce thou3 he were,
 Ne harme nother hurte · the hyghest of the rewme,
 But to holde him in hele · and helpe all his ffrendis.
 And if ony word write be · that wrothe make myghte 76
 My souereyne, that suget · I shulde to be,
 I put me in his power · and preie him, of grace,
 To take the entent of my trouthe · that thou3te non ylle.
 ffor to wrath no wyght · be my wyll neuere, 80
 As my soule be saff · ffrom synne at myn ende.
 The story is of non estate · that stryuen with her lustus,
 But tho that ffolwyn her fflessh · and here ffrelle thou3tis;
 So if my conceyll be clere · I can saie no more, 84
 But ho be greued in his gost · gouerne him better,
 And blame not the berne · that the book made,
 But the wickyd will · and the werkis after.

55. Cf. 3ut sauereþ me nat þi sawe; C 11. 107.

56. Cf. bi þe rode of Chestre; B. 5. 467.

68. The MS. omits fynde.

69. MS. yonghe.

72. Cf. þe *culorum* of þis clause; A. 3. 264; C. 12. 248.

78. Cf. Thenne knelede ich on my knees · and criede hure of grace,
 And preide hure pytously; C. 2. 76, 77.

Passus Primus.

NOW, Richard the redeles · reweth on 3ou-self,
 That lawelesse leddyn 3oure lyf · and 3oure peple bothe;
 ffor thoru the wyles and wronge · and wast in 3oure tyme,
 3e were lyghtlich y-lyfte · ffrom that 3ou leef thouzte, 4
 And ffrom 3oure willfull werkis · 3oure will was chaungid,
 And rafte was 3oure riott · and rest, ffor 3oure daiez
 Weren wikkid thoru 3oure cursid counceill · 3oure karis weren
 newed,
 And coueitise hath crasid · 3oure croune ffor euere! 8

Radix omnium malorum cupiditas.

Of alegeaunce now lerneth · a lesson other tweyne,
 Wher-by it standith · and stablithe moste—
 By drede, or be dyntis · or domes vntrewe,
 Or by creaunce of coyne · ffor castes of gile, 12
 By pilynge of 3oure peple · 3oure prynces to plese;
 Or that 3oure wylle were wrouzte · thouz wisdom it nolde;—
 Or be tallage of 3oure townes · without ony werre,
 By rewthles routus · that ryffled euere, 16
 By preysinge of polaxis · that no pete hadde,
 Or be dette ffor thi dees · deme as thou ffyndist;
 Or be ledinge of lawe · with loue well ytemprid.
 Though this be derklich endited · ffor a dull nolle, 20
 Miche nede is it not · to mwse ther-on,
 ffor as mad as I am · thouz I litill kunne,
 I cowde it discryue · in a ffewe wordys;
 ffor legiance without loue · litill thinge availith. 24
 But graceles gostis · gylours of hem-self,
 That neuere had harnesse · ne hayle-schouris,
 But walwed in her willis · ffor-weyned in here youthe,
 They sawe no manere sizth · saff solas and ese, 28

9. Cf. Furst I leornede to lyze · a lessun or tweyne; A. 5. 117.

15. MS. towunes or townnes.

16. MS. routus, altered to routes, unnecessarily.

17. Cf. Or Poule þe apostle · þat no pitee hadde; B. 10. 424; C. 12. 268.

19. Cf. And ledeþ þe lawe as hure lust · and louedayes makeþ; C. 4. 196.

24. Cf. Lawe with-uten loue · leye þere a bene! B. 11. 165.

27. Cf. And lete no wynnynge forwene hem · þe while þei ben 3onge; C. 6. 138.

And cowde no mysse amende · whan mysscheff was vp,
 But sorwed ffor her lustus · of lordschipe they hadde,
 And neuere ffor her trespas · oo tere wolde they lete!
 3e come to 3oure kyngdom · er 3e 3oure-self knewe, 31
 Crouned with a croune · that kyng vnder heuene
 Mizte not a better · haue bouzte, as I trowe;
 So ffull was it ffilled · with vertuous stones,
 With perlis of pris · to punnysshe the wrongis, 36
 With rubies rede · the rizth for to deme,
 With gemmes and Iuellis · Ioyned to-gedir,
 And pees amonge the peple · ffor peyne of thi lawis.
 It was ffull goodeliche ygraue · with gold al aboute; 40
 The braunchis aboue · boren grett charge;
 With diamantis derue · y-doutid of all
 That wrouzte ony wrake · within or withoute;
 With lewte and loue · yloke to thi peeris, 44
 And sapheris swete · that souzte all wrongis,
 Ypoudride wyth pete · ther it be ouzte,
 And traylid with trouthe · and treste al aboute;
 ffor ony cristen kyng · a croune well ymakyd. 48
 But where this croune bicom · a clerk were that wuste;
 But so as I can · declare it I thenke,
 And nempne no name; · but tho that nest were,
 ffull preuyly they pluckud · thy power away, 52
 And reden with realte · 3oure rewme thoru-oute,
 And as tyrauntis, of tiliers · token what hem liste,
 And paide hem on her pannes · whan her penyes lacked.
 ffor non of 3oure peple · durste pleyne of here wrongis, 56
 ffor drede of 3oure dukys · and of here double harmes.
 Men myztten as well haue huntid · an hare with a tabre,

29. Cf. *þi myschief is vppe*; B. 4. 72. 30. MS. *lordschpe*.
 33—37. Cf. *And coroned with a corone · þe kyng hath no betere*; . . .
 And þer-on rede rubies · and oper riche stones; C. 3. 11, 13.
 40. MS. *abouzte, both here and in ii. 2, 15, and 102*. Cf. *gold al a-boute*;
 C. 3. 158.
 42, 45. Cf. *And diamantz of derrest pris · and double manere safferes*; B. 2.
 13; *see the whole passage*. MS. *y-doutid*. 43. MS. *wroute*.
 44. Cf. *Ac loue and lounnesse · and leaute to-gederes*; C. 4. 447.
 46. MS. *Y-poundride*. 49. Cf. *I ne wot where þei bicom*; B. 5. 651.
 55. Cf. the account of how 'Pees' came by his '*panne* bloody'; C. 5. 74.
 56. Cf. *For þore men der nat pleyne · ne here pleinte shewe*; C. 4. 214; *see the whole passage*.

As aske ony mendis · ffor that thei mysdede,
 Or of ony of her men · thouȝ men wulde plete, 60
 ffor all was ffelawis and ffelawschepe · that ȝe with fferde,
 And no soule persone · to punnyshe the wrongis;
 And that maddid thi men · as thei nede muste.
 ffor wo, they ne wuste · to whom ffor to pleyne. 64
 ffor, as it is said · by elderne dawis,
 'Ther gromes and the goodmen · beth all eliche grette,
 Well wo beth the wones · and all that woneth ther-in!
 They ladde ȝou with loue · that ȝoure lawe dradde, 68
 To deme ȝoure dukys myssdedis · so derue thei were.

Thus was ȝoure croune crasid · till he was cast newe,
 Thoru partinge of ȝoure powere · to ȝoure paragals.
 Thus lacchide they with laughinge · and lourid longe after, 72
 But ffrist sawe they it not · ne youre-self nother;
 ffor all was wisliche ywrouȝte · as ȝoure witte demed,
 And no ffautis y-ffounde · till ffortune aperid.
 But had ȝoure croune be kepte · that comons it wiste, 76
 Ther nadde morder ne mysscheff · be amonge the grette.
 Thus ȝoure cautell to the comoune · hath combred ȝou all,
 That, but if god helpe · ȝoure heruest is ynne.
 Wyteth it not ȝoure counceill · but wyteth it more ȝoure-self, 80
 The ffortune that ffallyn is · to ffeitheles peple;
 And wayte well my wordis · and wrappe hem togedir,
 And constrwe thoru clergie · the clause in thin herte,
 Of maters that I thenke · to meve ffor the best 84
 ffor kyngis and kayseris · comynge here-after.

Whane ȝe were sette in ȝoure se · as a sir aughte,
 Ther carpinge comynliche · of conceill arisith,
 The cheuyteyns cheef · that ȝe chesse euere 88
 Weren all to yonge of ȝeris · to yeme swyche a rewme;
 Other hobbis ȝe hadden · of Hurlewaynis kynne,
 Reffusynge the reule · of realles kynde.

67. MS. Woll.

72. Cf. *pere* was *laughyng* and *louryng*; B. 5. 344.

75. MS. *fauntis*.

80. *misspelt* Wyteth (*alt.* to Wyteth) *the first time, and wytch the second time, in the MS.*

83. MS. *omits* þoru. Cf. *Clerkus* þat were confessours · couplede hem togederes *To construe this clause*; C. 5. 146, 147.

84. Cf. I dorste *meue* no *matere*; C. 11. 118.

85. MS. *Kayseceris*.

And whane ȝoure counceill I-knewe · ȝe come so at ones, 92
 ffor to leue on her lore · and be led be hem,
 ffor drede that they had · of demynge ther-after,
 And ffor curinge of hem-self · cried on ȝou euere,
 ffor to hente hele · of her owen greues, 96
 More than ffor wurschepe · that they to ȝou owed,
 They made ȝou to leue · that regne ȝe ne myȝte,
 Withoute busshinge adoune · of all ȝoure best ffrendis,
 Be a ffals colour · her caris to wayve, 100
 And to holde hem in hele · if it happe myȝte.
 ffor trostith rith treuly · and in no tale better,
 All that they moued · or mynged in that mater,
 Was to be sure of hem-self · and siris to ben y-callid; 104
 ffor that was all her werchinge · in worde and in dede.
 But had ȝe do duly · and as a duke oughte,
 The ffrist that ȝou fformed · to that ffals dede,
 He shulde have hadde hongynge · on hie on the fforckis, 108
 Thouȝ ȝoure brother y-born · had be the same.
 Than wolde other boynardis · haue ben abasshyd
 To haue meved ȝou to ony maters · that mysscheff had ben
 ynne.
 But ffor ȝe cleued to knavis · in this cas I avowe, 112
 That boldid thi burnes · to belde vpon sorowe,
 And stirid ȝou stouttely · till ȝe stombled all.

Passus Secundus.

But moche now me merueilith · and well may I in sothe,
 Of ȝoure large leuerey · to leodis aboute,
 That ȝe so goodliche ȝaf · but if gile letted,
 As hertis y-heedyd · and hornyd of kynde, 4
 So ryff as they ronne · ȝoure rewme thoru-oute,
 That non at ȝoure nede · ȝoure name wolde nempne
 In ffersnesse ne in ffoltheed · but ffaste fle away-ward,
 And some stode astonyed · and stared ffor drede, 8
 ffor eye of the Egle · that oure helpe brouȝte.
 And also in sothe · the seson was paste

98. MS. myste.

Passus ii. 2. MS. aboute; so also in l. 15.

111. MS. myssheff.

9. MS. brounte.

ffor hertis y-heedid · so hy and so noble
 To make ony myrthe · ffor mowtynge that nyghed. 12
 That bawtid ȝoure bestis · of here bolde chere;
 They seuerid and sondrid · ffor somere hem ffaylid,
 And fflowen in-to fforest · and ffeldis aboute,
 All the hoole herde · that helde so to-gedir; 16
 But ȝet they had hornes · half a ȝere after.
 Now liste me to lerne · ho me lere coude,
 What kynnes conceyll · that the kyng had,
 Or meued him most · to merke his liegis, 20
 Or serue hem with signes · that swarmed so thikke
 Thoru-oute his lond · in lengthe and in brede,
 That ho so had hobblid · thoru holtes and tounes,
 Or y-passid the patthis · ther the prynce dwellyd, 24
 Of hertis or hyndis · on hassellis brestis,
 Or some lordis leuere · that the lawe strid,
 He shulde haue y-mette · mo than y-nowe.
 ffor they acombrede the contre · and many curse seruid, 28
 And carped to the comounes · with the kyngys mouthe,
 Or with the lordis · ther they be-lefte were,
 That no renke shulde rise · reson to schewe.
 They plucked the plomayle · ffrom the pore skynnes, 32
 And schewed her signes · ffor men shulde drede
 To axe ony mendis · ffor her mys-dedis.
 Thus leuerez ouere-loked · ȝoure liegis ichone;
 ffor tho that had hertis · on hie on her brestis 36
 ffor the more partie · I may well avowe,
 They bare hem the bolder · ffor her gay broches,
 And busshid with her brestis · and bare adoune the pouere,
 Lieges that loued ȝou the lesse · ffor her [lither] dedis. 40
 So, trouthe to telle · as tounes-men said,
 ffor on that ȝe merkyd · ȝe myssed ten schore
 Of homeliche hertis · that the harme hente.
 Thane was it ffoly · in ffeith, as me thynketh, 44
 To sette siluer in signes · that of nouȝt serued.

16. to- in to-gedir is supplied in the MS. in a later hand.

17. a is supplied in the MS. in a later hand; cf. 'half a ȝere' in C. 3. 238.

25. MS. Or (*wrongly*).

35. MS. ichonne.

37. Cf. *ich may it wel avowe*; C. 4. 315.

40. MS. yuell (*for* lither).

45. Cf. Bere no ~~suber~~ see · that kynges sygne sheweþ; C. 5. 126.

I not what 3ou eylid · but if it ese were ;
 ffor ffrist at 3oure anoyntyng · alle were 3oure owene,
 Bothe hertis and hyndis · and helde of non other ; 48
 No lede of 3oure lond · but as a liege aughte,
 Tyl 3e, of 3oure dulnesse · deseucraunce made,
 Thoru 3oure side signes · that shente all the browet,
 And cast adoun the crokk · the colys amynd. 52

Omne regnum in se diuisum desolabitur ; luce xj^o. c.

3it am I lewde · and litill good schewe,
 To coueyte knowliche · of kyngis wittis,
 Or wilne to witte · how was the mevyng,
 That [ladde] 3ou to lykyng · 3oure liegis to merke, 56
 That loued 3ou full lelly · or leuerez beganne,
 And as redy to ride · or renne at 3oure heste,
 As wyghte myghte wilne · wonnyng vppon erthe,
 Tyll leuerez hem lette · and lordyns wrongis, 60
 As 3oure-self ffonde well · whane ffortune 3ou ffolwyd.
 ffor whan 3e list to lene · to 3oure owen lymmes,
 They were so ffeble and ffeynte · ffor ffaute of 3oure lawe,
 And so ffeble and wayke · wexe in the hammes, 64
 That they had no myghte · to amende 3oure greues,
 Ne to bere byrthen · 3oure banere to helpe.
 But it longith to no liegeman · his lord to anoye,
 Nother in werk ne in word · but if his witt ffayle. 68
 “No, redely,” quod Reson · “that reule I alowe ;
 Displese not thi demer · in dede ne in wordis,
 But if the liste ffor to lede · thi lyf in dissese.
 But 3if god haue grauntyd the · grace ffor to knowe 72
 Ony manere mysscheff · that my3tte be amendyd,
 Schewe that to thi souereyne · to schelde him ffrom harmes ;
 ffor, and he be blessid · the better the be-tydyth
 In tyme ffor to telle him · ffor thi trewe herte.” 76
 Now, ffor to telle trouthe · thus than me thynketh,

46. Cf. Ich wol wel, quath hunger · what syknesse 3ow aileþ ; C. 9. 271.

52. Cf. þat cast for to kele a croke · and saue the fatte aboue ; C. 22. 280.

56. MS. omits ladde.

57. Cf. And to loue me lelly ; B. 1. 78.

58. Cf. 3emen · to rennen and to ryde ; C. 4. 271.

61. ffolwyd ; the word ffayled is writen aboue, and is perhaps a better reading.

63. MS. ffau3te.

68. Cf. As in workes and in wordes ; C. 3. 94.

69. Cf. Forþy, reson, redelyche ; C. 5. 184.

That no manere meyntenour · shulde merkis bere,
 Ne haue lordis leuere · the lawe to apeire,
 Neither bragger ne boster · ffor no bremme wordis, 80
 But ho so had kunnyng · and conscience bothe,
 To stonde vnstombed · and stronge in his wittis,
 Lele in his leuyng · leuyd be his owen,
 That no manere mede · shulde make him wrye, 84
 ffor to trien a trouthe · be-twynne two sidis,
 And lette ffor no lordschep · the lawe to susteyne,
 Whane the pore pleyned · that put were to wrongis.
 And I were of conceill · by Crist that me bouzte, 88
 He shuld haue a signe · and sum-what be ȝere,
 ffor to kepe his contre · in quiete and in reste.
 This were a good grounde · so me god helpe!
 And a trewe tente · to take and to ȝeue, 92
 And ony lord of this londe · that leuerez vsith.
 But how the gayes han y-gon · god wotte the sothe
 Amonge myȝtfull men · alle these many ȝeris;
 And, whedir the grounde of ȝifte · were good other ille, 96
 Trouthe hathe determyned · the tente to the ende,
 And reson hath rehersed · the resceyte of all.
 ȝit, I trowe, ȝoure entente · at the ffrist tyme,
 Was, as I wene, ȝif I well thenke · in multitude of peple, 100
 That ȝe were the more myȝtier · ffor the many signes
 That ȝe and ȝoure seruauntis · aboute so thikke sowid;
 And that they were more tristi · and trewer than other,
 To loue ȝou ffor the leuere · that legeaunce stroied; 104
 Or ellis ffor a skylle · that skathed ȝoure-self,
 That comounes of contre · in costis aboute
 Sholde knowe be hir quentise · that the kyng loued hem
 ffor her priuy prynte · passinge another. 108
 ȝif that was ȝoure purpos · it passith my wittis
 To deme discrecioun · of ȝoure well-doyng!
 Thus were ȝe disceyued · thorū ȝoure duble hertis,
 That neuere weren to truste · so god saue my soule! 112

80. Cf.—*braggyng* · *abosted*, &c.; C. 9. 152.

82. Cf. *to stomble*, *yf he stande*; C. 11. 35.

93. *For And read For?*

97. Cf. *Til trewe hadde ytermenyd* · here *trespas to þe ende*; C. 2. 93.

106. MS. *abouzte*; so also in ll. 102, 152, 157, 182, 186. Cf. *Yf þei knew eny countreie · oþer costes aboute*; C. 11. 12.

But had the good Greehonde · be not agreued,
 But cherischid as a cheffeteyne · and cheff of 3oure lese,
 3e hadde had hertis ynowe at 3oure wille · to go and to ride.
 And also in serteyne · the sothe ffor to telle, 116
 I wondir not hyly · thou3 heed-dere thou ffailid;
 ffor litill on 3oure lyf · the list ffor to rewe
 On rascaile that rorid · with ribbis so lene,
 ffor ffaute of her ffode · that fflatereris stelen, 120
 And euere with here wylis and wast · ofte they hem anoyed,
 That pouerte hem prickid · ffull preuyliche to pleyne,
 But where, they ne wyste · ne ho it wolde amende!
 Thus 3e derid hem vnduly · with droppis of anger, 124
 And stonyed hem with stormes · that stynted neuere,
 But plucked and pulled hem · anon to the skynnes,
 That the ffresinge frost · ffreted to here hertis.
 So whanne 3oure hauntelere dere · were all ytakyn, 128
 Was non of the rasskayle · aredy ffull growe,
 To bere ony bremme heed · as a best aughte,
 So wyntris wedir · hem wessh with the snowis,
 With many derke mystis · that maddid her eyne. 132
 ffor well mowe 3e wyttyn · and so mowe we all,
 That harde is the somer · ther sonne schyneth neuere.
 3e ffostrid and ffodid · a ffewe of the best,
 And leyde on hem lordschipe · aleyne vppon other, 136
 And bereued the raskall · that rith wolde thei hadde,
 And knewe not the caris · ne cursis that walkyd;
 But mesure is a meri mene · thou3 men moche yerne:—

*Deus exaudit clamorem pauperum, et iudicat causam eorum ;
 David in psalmis.*

Thus be the rotus · 3oure raskall endurid, 140
 Tyll the blessid bredd · brodid his wyngis,
 To couere hem ffrom colde · as his kynde wolde.
 Rith as the hous-hennes · vppon londe hacchen,
 And cherichen her chekonys · ffro chele of the wynter, 144
 Ryth so the hende Egle · the heyere of hem all,
 Hasteth him in heruest · to houyn his bryddis,

120. MS. ffaugte. MS. fflateris.

128. MS. where.

139. *Measure* is medcyne · þou3 þow moche yerne ; B. 1. 35 ; C. 2. 33.

142. Cf. *as hus kynde wolde* ; C. 4. 129 ; and 9. 161.

145. MS. Eyere ; *but see* iii. 74.

And besieth him besely · to breiden hem feedrin,
 Tyll her ffre ffreddis · be ffulliche y-pynned, 148
 That they haue wynges at her wyll · to wonne vppon hille,
 ffor venym on the valeye · hadde ffoule with hem ffare,
 Tyll trouthe the triacle · telde somme her sothes.
 Thus baterid this bred · on bussches aboute, 152
 And gaderid gomes on grene · ther as they walkyd,
 That all the schroff and schroup · sondrid ffrom other.
 He mellid so the matall · with the hand-molde,
 That [they] lost [of their] lemes · the leuest that they had. 156
 Thus ffoulyd this Faukyn · on ffylde aboute,
 And cauȝte of the kytes · a cartfull at ones,
 That rentis and robis · with raveyn euere lauȝte.
 Ȝit was not the Fawcon · ffull ffed at his likynge, 160
 ffor it cam him not of kynde · kytes to loue.
 Than bated he boldeliche · as a brid wolde,
 To plewme on his pray · the pol ffro the nekk;
 But the blernyed boynard · that his bagg stall, 164
 Where purraile-is pulter · was pynnyd ffull ofte,
 Made the Fawcon to ffloter · and ffussh ffor anger,
 That the boy hadd be bounde · that the bagge kepte.
 But sone ther-after · in a schorte tyme, 168
 As ffortune ffolwith · ech ffode till his ende,
 This lorell that ladde · this loby away
 Ouere ffrithe and fforde · ffor his ffals dedis,
 Lyghte on the lordschepe · that to the brid longid, 172
 And was ffelliche ylauȝte · and luggid ffull ylle,
 And brouȝte to the brydd · and his blames rehersid
 Preuȝly at the parlement · amonge all the peple.
 Thus hawkyd this Egle · and houed aboue, 176
 That, as god wolde · that gouerneth all thingis,
 Ther nas kyte ne krowe · that kareyne hantid
 That he ne [lauȝte] with his lynage · ne louyd ffull sone.
 ffor wher so they fferde · be ffirȝth or be wones, 180
 Was non of hem all · that him hide myȝth,

149. MS. heue (*for* haue).

151. Cf. For *treuthe* telleȝ þat loue · ys *tryacle* for synne; C. 2. 147.

156. MS. *omits* þey and of þeir.

158. MS. kuyttis, *with* kytes *written above*; see l. 161.

170. MS. hadde (*for* ladde).

179. MS. *omits* lauȝte.

But cam with him a reclayme · ffro costis aboute,
 And fell with her ffetheris · fflat vppon the erthe,
 As madde of her mynde · and mercy be-souzte, 184
 They myzte not aschonne · the sorowe they had serued.
 So lymed leues · were leyde all aboute,
 And panteris preuyliche · pight vppon the grounde,
 With grennes of good heere · that god him-self made, 188
 That where so they walkid · they waltrid dounwardis;
 And euere houed the Egle · on hie on the skyes,
 And kenned clerliche · as his kynde axith,
 Alle the preuy poyntis · that the pies wrouzth. 192

Passus Tercius.

NOW leue we this beu brid · till I restore,
 ffor mater that my mynde · is meued in now,
 That whi the hie hertis · her hele so mysside,
 That pasture axid · rith to here pure wombis; 4
 I wolle schewe as I sawe · till I se better,
 And if I walke out of the wey · I wolle me repente.
 Now herkeneth, hende men · how that me thynkyth,
 Sauynge souereynes · and sages avise, 8
 That the moste myscheff · vppon molde on
 Is demed the dede · y-do azeins kynde.
 3it clereth this clause · no-thinge my wittis,
 With out more mater · what it mene wolde. 12
 I mene of the hertis · that hautesse of 3eris,
 That pasture prikkyth · and her preuy age;
 Whan they han hoblid on the holte · an hundrid of 3eris,
 That they ffeblen in ffeissh · in ffelle, and in bones, 16
 Her kynde is to keuere · if they cacche myzth
 Adders that harmen · alle hende bestis;
 Thoru busschis and bromes · this beste, of his kynde,
 Secheth and sercheth · tho schrewed wormes, 20
 That steleth on the stedis · to styngre hem to deth;

183. Cf. platte hure to þe erthe; C. 7. 3.

191. Cf. ri3te as kynde axeth; B. 2. 27.

Passus iii. 9. Cf. þe moste myschif on molde · mounteþ vp faste; C. 1. 65.

18. MS. armen, with h supplied above the line.

And whanne it happeth the herte · to hente the edder,
 He putyth him to peyne · as his pray asketh,
 And ffedith him on the venym · his ffelle to anewe, 24
 To leue at more lykyng · a longe tyme after.
 This is clergie, hir kynde · coltis nat to greue,
 Ne to hurle with haras · no Hors well atamed,
 Ne to stryue with Swan · thouȝ it sholle werre, 28
 Ne to bayten on the Bere · ne bynde him nother,
 Ne to wilne to woo · that were hem ny sibbe,
 Ne to liste ffor to loke · that her alie bledde;
 This was azeins kynde · as clerkis me tolde: 32

*Propter ingratitudinem liber homo reuocatur in seruitutem,
 ut in stimulo compuncionis, et in lege ciuili.*

And therffor the hertis · here hele so myssid,
 And myȝte nat passe the poynte · of her prime age.
 Now constrew ho so kunne · I can saie no more,
 But ffare I wolde to the fflowle · that I beffore tolde. 36

Off all billid breddis · that the bough spareth,
 The propirte of partriche · to preise me lustith,
 That in the somer seson · whane sittinge nyeth,
 That ich ffoule with his ffere · ffolwith his kynde, 40
 This brid be a bank · bildith his nest,
 And heipeth his eiren · and hetith hem after.
 And whane the dame hath ydo · that to the dede longith,
 And hopith ffor to hacche · or heruest begynne, 44
 Thanne cometh ther a congioun · with a grey cote,
 As not of his nolle · as he the nest made,
 Another proud partriche · and precyth to the nest,
 And preuylich pirith · til the dame passe, 48
 And sesith on his sete · with hir softe plumes,
 And houeth the eyren · that the hue laide,
 And with hir corps keuereth hem · till that they kenne,
 And ffostrith and ffodith · till ffedris schewe, 52

23. Cf. *as þe worlde askep*; C. 1. 21. 25. Cf. *a longe tyme after*; C. 8. 203.

26. nat *above the line*.

27. MS. *ne*.

34. Cf. *Whoso passeþ þat poynt*; C. 2. 98.

39. Cf. *In a somer sesoun*; C. 1. 1.

41. Cf. *Briddes I hihelde · þat in buskes made nestes*; B. 11. 336; and compare the whole passage in B. 11. 318-353 with the context.

42. MS. *heires*, which is obviously a blunder; for see l. 50, below. *Heires* = *heirs*; but *eiren* = *eggs*.

And cotis of kynde · hem keuere all aboute.
 But as sone as they styffe · and that they steppe kunne,
 Than cometh and crieth · her owen kynde dame,
 And they ffolwith the vois · at the ffrist note, 56
 And leueth the lurker · that hem er ladde,
 ffor the schrewe schrapid · to selde ffor her wombis,
 That her lendys were lene · and leued with hunger.
 But than the dewe dame · dineth hem swythe, 60
 And ffostrith hem fforthe · till they ffile kunne.
 ‘What is this to mene, man?’ · maiste thou axe,
 ‘ffor it is derklich endited · ffor a dull panne;
 Wherffore I wilne · 3if it thi will were, 64
 The partriche propurtes · by whom that thou menest?’
 A! Hicke Heuyheed! · hard is thi nolle
 To cacche ony kunnyng · but cautell bigynne!
 Herdist thou not with eeris · how that I er tellde, 68
 How the Egle in the est · entrid his owene,
 And cried and clepid · after his owen kynde briddis,
 That weren anoyed in his nest · and norished ffull ille,
 And well ny yworewid · with a wronge leder? 72
 But the nedy nestlingis · whan they the note herde
 Of the hende Egle · the heyer of hem all,
 Thei busked ffro the busches · and breris that hem noyed,
 And burnished her beekis · and bent to-him-wardis, 76
 And ffolowid him ffersly · to ffighte ffor the wrongis;
 They bablid with her billis · how thei bete were,
 And tenyd with twiggis · two and twenty 3eris.
 Thus lasfe they the leder · that hem wrong ladde, 80
 And tymed no twynte · but tolled her cornes,
 And gaderid the grotus · with gyle, as I trowe.
 Than ffolwid they her ffre fflader · as good ffeith wolde,
 That he hem ffede shulde · and ffostre fforther, 84
 And bringe hem out of bondage · that they were brou3th inne.
 Thanne sighed the swymmers · ffor the Swan ffailid,
 And ffolwid this Faucoun · thoru ffeldus and tounes,
 With many ffaire fflowle · thou3 they ffeynte were, 88
 And heuy ffor the hurte · that the Hors hadde.

53. MS. aboute.

 62. Cf. *what is þis to mene*; B. 1. 11.

 78. Cf. *And so I babeled on my bedes*; B. 5. 8.

ȝit they fferkyd hem fforth · as ffaste as they myȝte,
 To haue the Egles helpe · of harme that they hadde;
 ffor he was heed of hem all · and hieste of kynde, 92
 To kepe the croune · as cronecle tellith.
 He blythid the Beere · and his bond braste,
 And lete him go at large · to lepe where he wolde.
 But tho all the berlingis · brast out at ones, 96
 As ffayne as the ffoule · that fflieth on the skyes
 That bosse was vnbounde · and brouȝte to his owene.
 They gaderid hem to-gedir · on a grette route,
 To helpe the heeris · that had many wrongis; 100
 They gaglide fforth on the grene · ffor they greued were,
 That her ffrendis were ffalle · thoru ffelouns castis.
 They mornyd ffor the morthir · of manfull knyȝtis,
 That many a styff storme · with-stode ffor the comunes; 104
 They monside the marchall · ffor his myssedede,
 That euell coude his craft · whan he clothed the Stede.
 And euere as they ffolwide · this Faucoun aboute,
 At iche mevinge ffotte · venyaunce they asked 108
 On all that assentid · to that synfull dede.

Arere now to Richard · and reste here awhile,
 ffor a preuy poynt · that persith my wittis.
 Of ffautis I ffynde · that ffrist dede engendre 112
 Cursidnesse and combraunce · amonge the yonge lordis,
 And the wikkid werchinge · that walmed in her daies,
 And ȝit woll here-after · but wisdome it lette.
 That were a lord of lond · that lawe hathe in honde, 116
 That to lyghtliche leueth · or lewte apere,
 The tale of a trifflour · in turmentours wede,
 That neuere reed good rewle · ne resons bookis!
 ffor ben they rayed arith · they recchith no fforthir, 120
 But studieth all in stroutynge · and stireth amys euere;
 ffor all his witte in his wede · ys wrappid ffor sothe,
 More than in mater to amende · the peple that ben mys-led.

94. MS. brond; Mr Wright *prints* brond, but surely it is merely bond. misspelt brond owing to the influence of the following word braste.

97. MS. was (*for as*). panne was I also fayne · as foule of faire morwe: B. 10. 153; C. 12. 103.

98. MS. brouute.

99. MS. rouȝte.

105. MS. þe (*for þey*).

107. MS. abouȝte.

112. MS. ffautis.

121. MS. stroutynge, here and in l. 134; but see l. 189.

ffor I say ffor my-self · and schewe, as me thynchith, 124
 That ho is riall of his ray · that light reede him ffolwith;
 3it swiche ffresshe ffoodis · beth ffeet in-to chambris,
 And ffor her dignesse endauntid · of dullisshe nollis,
 And, if thou well waite · of no wight ellis: 128

Qui mollibus vestiuntur in domibus regum sunt: in euangelio.

Than waite mo wayes · how the while turneth
 With gyuleris, Ioyffull · ffor here gery laces,
 And ffor her wedis so wyde · wise beth y-holde;
 They casteth hem to creauñce · the courte ffor to plese, 132
 And hopen to be hied · in hast, yif they my3the,
 Thoru swiche stif stroutynge · that stroyeth the rewme;
 But here wey is all wronge · ther wisdom is ynned,
 For they lepith als lyghtly · at the longe goynge, 136
 Out of the domes carte · as he that throff neuere.
 ffor they kepeth no coyne · that cometh to here hondis,
 But chaunchyth it ffor cheynes · that in Chepe hangith,
 And settith all her siluer · in seintis and hornes, 140
 And ffor-doth the coyne · and many other craftis,
 And maketh the peple ffor pens-lac · in pointe ffor to wepe;
 And 3it they beth ytake fforth · and her tale leued,
 And ffor her newe nysete · nexte to the lordis. 144
 Now, be the lawe of Lydfford · in londe [and] in water
 Thilke lewde ladde · ou3te euyll to thryue,
 That hongith on his hippis · more than he wynneth,
 And douteth no dette · so dukis hem preise, 148
 But beggith and borwith · of burgeis in tounes
 ffurris of ffoyne · and other ffelle-ware,
 And not the better of a bene · thou3 they boru euere.
 And, but if the slevis · slide on the erthe, 152
 Thei woll be wroth as the wynde · and warie hem that it made;
 And [but] 3if it were elbowis · adoun to the helis,
 Or passinge the knee · it was not acouñted.

124. Cf. *Ich seye it for my-selue*; C. 5. 134.

126. Cf. and *brou3te hir in-to chaumbre*; B. 3. 10.

136. MS. But (*for* For); *wrongly repeated*. MS. lyghly.

140. MS. seimtis (*uncertain*).

142. MS. pephe.

145. MS. ne; *read* and.

148. MS. dou3teth.

150. MS. whare.

153. Cf. *As wroth as þe wynd*; C. 4. 486.

154. *Supply* but; as in l. 152.

And if Pernell preisid · the plytis bihynde, 156
 The costis were acouñtid · paye whan he myȝth.
 The leesinge so likyde · ladies and other,
 That they Ioied of the Iette · and gyside hem ther-vnder;
 And if Felice ffonde ony ffaute · thenne of the makynge, 160
 Yt was y-sent sone · to shape of the newe.
 But now ther is a gyse · the queyntest of all,
 A wondir coriouse crafte · y-come now of late,
 That men clepith kerving · the clothe all to pecis, 164
 That seuene goode sowers · sixe wekes after
 Moun not sett the seemes · ne sewe hem aȝeyn.
 But ther is a proffit in that pride · that I preise euere.
 ffor thei ffor the pesinge paieth · pens ten duple 168
 That the clothe costened · the craft is so dere.
 Now if I sothe shall saie · and shonne side tales,
 Ther is as moche good witte · in swyche gomes nollis,
 As thou shuldist mete of a myst · ffro morwe tyll euen! 172
 ȝit blame I no burne · to be, as him ouȝte,
 In comliche clothinge · as his statt axith;
 But to ledyn her lust · all here lyff-daies
 In quentise of clothinge · ffor to queme sir pride, 176
 And euere-more stroutynge · and no store kepe,
 And iche day a newe deuyse · it dullith my wittis
 That ony lord of a lond · shulde leue swiche thingis,
 Or clepe to his conceill · swiche manere cotis, 180
 That loueth more her lustis · than the lore of oure lord.
 And if a lord his leuere · lyste ffor to ȝeue,
 Ther may no gome ffor goodnesse · gette ther-of but lite,
 ffor curtesie, ffor comlynesse · ne ffor his kynde herte, 184
 But rather ffor his rancour · and rennyng ouere peple,
 ffor braggyng and ffor bostynge · and beringe vppon oilles,
 ffor cursidnes of conscience · and comynge to the assises.
 This makyth men mysdo · more than ouȝte ellis, 188
 And to stroute and to stare · and stryue aȝeyn vertu.

156. Cf. He preide *purnele* · here porfil to leue; C. 6. 129.

167. MS. *aprrfith* (*sic*), with a profeſt written above it.

172. Cf. *ȝow myȝt bet mete þe myst*; C. 1. 163.

176. Cf. In cuntinaunce of *clopynges* · *queinteliche de-gyset*; A. pr. 24.

188. Cf. And *makeþ men mys-do* · meny score tymes; C. 4. 159.

So [be] clergie, the cause · comsith in grette,
 Of all manere mysscheff · that men here vsyn.
 ffor wolde they blame the burnes · that brouzte newe gysis, 192
 And dryue out the dagges · and all the Duche cotis,
 And sette hem a-side · and scorte of hem telle,
 And lete hem pleye in the porche · and presse non ynnere,
 Ne no proude peniles · with his peynte sleve; 196
 And eke repreue robbers · and riffleris of peple,
 fflatereris and ffals men · that no ffeith vseth,
 And alle deabolik doeris · dispise hem ichone,
 And coile out the knyztys · that knowe well hem-self, 200
 That were sad of her sawis · and suffre well coude,
 And had traueilid in her tyme · and temprid hem-self,
 And cherliche cheriche hem · as cheff in the halle,
 ffor to ordeyne officeris · and all other thyngis; 204
 Men shulde wete in a while · that the world wolde amende,
 So vertue wolde fflowe · whan vicis were ebbid.

But now to the mater · that I be-ffore meved,
 Of the gomes so gay · that grace hadde affendid, 208
 And how stille that steddeffaste stode · amonge this reccheles
 peple,

That had awilled his wyll · as wisdom him taughte:
 ffor he drough him to an herne · at the halle ende,
 Well homelich yhelid · in an holsume gyse, 212
 Not ouerelonge, but ordeyned · in the olde schappe,
 With grette browis y-bente · and a berde eke,
 And y-wounde in his wedis · as the wedir axith;
 He wondrid in his wittis · as he well myzthe, 216
 That the hie housinge · herborowe ne myghte
 Halfdell the houshould · but hailes hem helped;
 But ffor crafte that he coude · caste thenne or be-thenke,
 He myzte not wonne in the wones · ffor witt that he vsid; 220
 But, aroutyd ffor his ray · and rebuked ofte,
 He had leue of the lord · and of ladies alle,
 ffor his good gouernaunce · to go or he drank!

190. MS. *omits* be.

198. MS. *fflateris*.

217. MS. *housinge*.

220. Cf. Lorde, who shal *wonne* in *pi wones*; B. 3. 234.

221. MS. *aroutyd*.

193. Cf. *let dagge hus clopes*; C. 23. 143.

201. MS. *coude*. So also in l. 219.

Ther was non of the mene · that they ne merueilid moche, 224
 How he cam to the courte · and was not y-knowe;
 But als sone as they wiste · that Witt was his name,
 And that the kyng knewe him not · ne non of his knyztis,
 He was halowid and y-huntid · and y-hote trusse, 228
 And his dwellinge ydemed · a bowe-drawte ffrom hem,
 And ich man y-charchid · to schoppe at his croune,
 ȝif he nyhed hem ony nere · than they had him nempned.
 The portir with his pikis · tho put him vttere, 232
 And warned him the wickett · while the wacche durid:
 "Lete sle him!" quod the sleues · that slode vppon the erthe,
 And alle the berdles burnes · bayed on him euere,
 And schorned him, ffor his slaueyn · was of the olde schappe.
 Thus Malaperte was myȝtffull · and maister of hous, 237
 And euere wandrid Wisdom · without the ȝatis.
 "By him that wrouȝte this world!" · quod Wisdom in wrath,
 "But ȝif ȝe woll sumtyme · I walke in amonge ȝou, 240
 I shall fforbede ȝou burnes · the best on this erthe,
 That is, gouernance of gettinge · and grace that him ffollwith;
 ffor these two trewly · twynned ȝet neuere."
 And so it fell on hem, in ffeith · ffor ffautis that they vsid, 244
 That her grace was a-goo · ffor grucchinge chere,
 ffor the wronge that they wrouȝte · to Wisdom affore.
 ffor tristith, als trewly · as tyllinge us helpeth,
 That iche rewme vndir roff · of the reyne-bowe 248
 Sholde stable and stonde · be these thre degres:
 By gouernaunce of grete · and of good age;
 By styffnesse and strengthe · of steeris well y-yokyd,
 That beth myȝthffull men · of the mydill age; 252
 And be laboreris of lond · that lyfflode ne ffayle.
 Thanne wolde [right dome] reule · if reson were amongis us,
 That ich leode lokide · what longid to his age,
 And neuere ffor to passe more · (x) poynt fforther, 256
 To vsurpe the service · that to sages bilongith,

228. MS. y-hotte. Cf. Ouer-al houted out · and yhote trusse; C. 3. 228.

241. MS. burnesse.

244. MS. ffautis.

248. Cf. ȝe richest rewme · þat reyne ouer houeth; B. 3. 207.

249. Cf. gan stable and stynte; B. 1. 120.

253. Cf. And lerne to labore with londe · lest lyflode hym faile; C. 9. 295.

254. MS. omits right dome.

To be-come conselleris · er they kunne rede,
 In schenshepe of souereynes · and shame at the last.
 ffor it ffallith as well to ffodis · of four and twenty 3eris, 260
 Or yonge men of yistirday · to 3eue good redis,
 As be-cometh a kow · to hoppe in a cage!
 It is not vnknownen · to kunnyng leodis,
 That rewlars of rewmes · around all the erthe 264
 Were not yffoundid · at the ffrist tyme
 To leue al at likyng · and lust of the world,
 But to laboure on the lawe · as lewde men on plowes,
 And to merke meyntenourz · with maces ichonne, 268
 And to strie strouters · that sterede a3eine rithis,
 And alle the myssedoers · that they my3te ffynde,
 To put hem in preson · a peere thou3 he were;
 And [not] to rewle as reremys · and rest on the daies, 272
 And spende of the spicerie · more than it nedid,
 Bothe wexe and wyn · in wast all aboute,
 With deyntes y-doublid · and daunsinge to pipis,
 In myrthe with moppis · myrrours of synne. 276
 3it fforbede I no burne · to be blithe sum while;
 But all thinge hath tyme · ffor to tempre glee:
 ffor caste all the countis · that the kyng holdith,
 And loke how these lordis · loggen hem-self, 280
 And euere shall thou ffynde · as ffer as thou walkiste,
 That wisdom and ouere-wacche · wonneth ffer asundre;
 But whane the gouernaunce goth thus · with tho the hous gie
 shulde,
 And letith lyghte of the lawe · and lesse of the peple, 284
 And herkeneth all to honour · and to ese eke,
 And that ich wyght with his witte · waite on him euere,
 To do hem reuerence aright · thou3 the rigge brest,
 This warmnesse in welth · with wy vppon erthe 288
 My3te not longe dure · as doctourz us tellith.
 ffor ho so thus leued · his lyff to the ende,
 Euere wrappid in welle · and with no wo mette,

260. MS. *xxiiij*; to be read *four and twenty*, not *twenty-four*. Cf. l. 79, above.

272. MS. *om.* not.

274. MS. *abou3te*.

282. MS. What, *probably* by mistake.

284. Cf. *And let lyght of þe lawe · and lasse of þe knyght*; C. 9. 165.

Myzte seie that he sawe · that seie was neuere, 292
 That heuene were vnhonge · out of the hookis,
 And were boun at his bidding · ȝif it be myzte!
 But clerkis knew I non ȝete · that so coude rede
 In bokis y-bounde · thouȝ ȝe brouȝte alle 296
 That ony wy welldith · wonnyng vppon erthe;
 ffor in well and in woo · the world euere turneth,
 ȝit ther is kew-kaw · thouȝ he come late,
 A new thing that noyeth · nedy men and other, 300
 Whanne realles remeveth · and ridith thorū tounes,
 And carieth ouere contre · ther comunnes dwelleth,
 To preson the pillourz · that ouere the pore renneth;
 For that were euene in her weye · if they well ride. 304
 But ȝit ther is a ffoule ffaute · that I ffynde ofte;
 They prien affter presentis · or pleyntis ben y-clepid,
 And abateth all the billis · of tho that nouȝth bringith;
 And ho so grucche or grone · aȝeins her grette willes, 308
 Mey lese her lyff lyghtly · and no lesse weddis.
 Thus is the lawe louyd · thorū myȝhty lordis willys,
 That meyneteyne myssdoers · more than other peple.
 ffor mayntenaunce many day · well more is the reuthe! 312
 Hath y-had mo men · at mete and at melis,
 Than ony cristen kyng · that ȝe knewe euere;
 ffor, as reson and rith · rehersed to me ones,
 Tho ben men of this molde · that most harme worchen. 316
 ffor chyders of Chester · were chose many daies
 To ben of conceill ffor causis · that in the court hangid,
 And pledid pipoudris · alle manere pleyntis.
 They cared ffor no coyffes · that men of court vsyn, 320
 But meved many maters · that man neuer thouȝte,
 And ffeyned ffalshed · till they a ffyne had,
 And knewe no manere cause · as comunnes tolde.
 Thei had non other signe · to schewe the lawe 324
 But a preuy palette · her pannes to kepe,
 To hille here lewde heed · in stede of an houe.

295. MS. kne. MS. coude.

305. MS. ffaunte.

309. Cf. Ich dorst haue leid *my lyue* · and no lasse wedde; C. 4. 260.311. Cf. To *meyntene mysdoers* · Mede þei take; B. 3. 246.

316. Cf. For þise aren men on þis molde · þat moste harme worcheth; B. 3. 80.

317. MS. where.

They constrewed quarellis · to quenche the peple,
 And pletid with pollaxis · and poyntis of swerdis, 328
 And at the dome-geuyng · drowe out the bladis,
 And lente men leuere · of her longe battis.
 They lacked alle vertues · that a Iuge shulde haue;
 ffor, er a tale were ytolde · they wolde trie the harmes, 332
 Without ony answe · but ho his lyf hatid.
 And ho so pleynd to the prince · that pees shulde kepe,
 Of these mystirmen · medlers of wrongis,
 He was lyghtliche y-lauzte · and y-luggyd of many, 336
 And y-mummyd on the mouthe · and manaced to the deth.
 They leid on thi leigis, Richard · lasshis y-now,
 And drede neuere a dele · the dome of the lawe.
 Ther nas rial of the rewme · that hem durste rebuke, 340
 Ne Iuge, ne Iustice · that Iewis durste hem deme
 ffor oute that thei toke · or trespassid to the peple.
 This was a wondir world · ho so well lokyd,
 That gromes ouere-grewe · so many grette maistris; 344
 ffor this was the rewle in this rewme · while they here regnyd.
 Thouȝ I satte seuenenyght · and slepte ffull selde,
 [I miȝte not reche redili · to rekene the nombre]
 Of many mo wrongis · than I write coude; 348
 ffor selde were the sergiauntis · souȝte ffor to plete,
 Or ony prentise of courte · preied of his wittis,
 The while the Degonys domes · weren so endauntid.
 Tille oure sire in his see · aboue the seuene sterris, 352
 Sawe the many mysscheuys · that these men dede,
 And no mendis ymade · but menteyned euere
 Of him that was hiest · y-holde for to kepe
 His liegis in lawe · and so her loue gette. 356
 He sente ffor his seruantis · that sembled many
 Of baronys and baccheleris · with many brizth helmes,
 With the comunes [of] the contres · they cam all at ones;
 And as a duke douȝty · in dedis of armes, 360
 In full reall aray · he rood vpon hem euere,

336. MS. lyghliche. Cf. Lorkynge þorw lonas · to-logged of menye; C. 3. 226.

347. A line lost; supplied by guess.

348. MS. Coude.

349. MS. serigauntis.

351. MS. dogonys; see l. 362, below.

352. Cf. by the seuene sterres; C. 18. 98.

354. MS. menteyne it, absurdly.

Tyll Degon and Dobyn · that mennys doris brastyn,
 And were y-dubbid of a duke · ffor her while domes,
 Awakyd ffor wecchis · and wast that they vsid, 364
 And ffor her breme blastis · buffettis henten.
 Than gan it to calme · and clere all aboute,
 That iche man myzte · ho so mynde hadde,
 Se, be the sonne · that so bryte schewed, 368
 The mone at the mydday · meve, and the sterris,
 ffolwinge ffelouns · ffor her ffalse dedis,
 Devourours of vetaile · that ffouzten er thei paide.

Passus Quartus.

FOR where was euere ony cristen kyng · that 3e euere knewe,
 That helde swiche an household · be the half-delle
 As Richard in this rewme · thoru myserule of other,
 That alle his ffynys ffor ffautis · ne his ffee-ffermes, 4
 Ne ffor-ffeyturis ffele · that ffelle in his daies,
 Ne the nownagis · that newed him euere,
 As Marche and Moubray · and many mo other,
 Ne alle the issues of court · that to the kyng longid, 8
 Ne sellynge, that sowkid · siluer rith ffaste,
 Ne alle the prophete of the lond · that the prince owed,
 Whane the countis were caste · with the custum of wullus,
 Myzte not areche · ne his rent nother, 12
 To paie the pore peple · that his puruyours toke,
 Withoute preiere at a parlement · a poundage biside,
 And a fifyneth · and a dyme eke,
 And with-all the custum of the clothe · that cometh to ffayres?
 And 3et, ne had creaunce icome · at the last ende, 17
 With the comunes curse · that cleued on hem euere,
 They had be drawe to the deuyll · ffor dette that they owed.
 And whanne the reot and the reeuell · the rent thus passid, 20
 And no thing y-laste · but the bare baggis,
 Than ffelle it afforse · to ffille hem a3eyne,
 And ffeyned sum ffolie · that ffailid hem neuer,

364. MS. *wrongly inserts* And *at the beginning of this line.*

366. MS. *abouzte.*

Passus iv. 4. MS. *ffauztis.*

And cast it be colis · with her conceill at euene, 24
 To haue preuy parlement · for profit of hem-self,
 And lete write writtis · all in wex closid,
 ffor peeris and prelatis · that thei apere shuld,
 And sente side sondis · to schreuis aboute, 28
 To chese swiche cheualleris · as the charge wold,
 To schewe ffor the schire · in company with the grete.
 And whanne it drowe to the day · of the dede-doyng,
 That souereynes were semblid · and the schire-knyztis, 32
 Than, as her fforme is, frist · they begynne to declare
 The cause of her comynge · and than the kyngis will.
 Comliche a clerk than · comsid the wordis,
 And pronouncid the poyntis · aparte to hem alle, 36
 And meved ffor money · more than ffor out ellis,
 In glosinge of grette · lest greyues arise.
 And whanne the tale was tolde · anon to the ende,
 A-morwe thei must, affore mete · mete to-gedir, 40
 The knyztis of the comunete · and carpe of the maters,
 With citiseyns of shiris · y-sent ffor the same,
 To reherse the articlis · and graunte all her askynge.
 But ȝit ffor the manere · to make men blynde, 44
 Somme argued aȝein rith · then a good while,
 And said, “we beth ~~seruantis~~ · and sallere fongen,
 And y-sent ffro the shiris · to shewe what hem greueth,
 And to parle ffor her prophete · and passe no fferthere, 48
 And to graunte of her gold · to the grett wattis
 By no manere wronge way · but if werre were;
 And if we ben ffalls · to tho us here ffyndeth,
 Euyll be we worthy · to welden oure hire.” 52
 Than satte summe · as siphre doth in awgrym,
 That noteth a place · and no-thing availith;
 And some had ysoupid · with Symond ouere euen,
 And schewed ffor the schire · and here schew lost; 56
 And somme were tituleris · and to the kyng wente,
 And fformed him of foos · that good ffrendis weren,
 That bablid ffor the best · and no blame serued
 Of kyng ne conceyll · ne of the comunes nother, 60

25. MS. pproffitt (*sic*).

28. MS. aboute.

35. Cf. *Corteyssliche þe knyzt þen · comsede þese wordes*; C. 9. 32.

Ho so toke good kepe · to the *culorum*.
 And somme slombrid and slepte · and said but a lite;
 And somme mafflid with the mouth · and nyst what they mente;
 And somme had hire · and helde ther-with euere, 64
 And wolde no fforthier affoot · ffor ffer of her maistris;
 And some were so soleyne · and sad of her wittis,
 That er they come to the clos · acombrid they were,
 That thei the conclucioun than · constrewe ne couthe, 68
 No burne of the benche · of borowe nothcr ellis,
 So blynde and so ballid · and bare was the reson.
 And somme were so ffers · at the ffrist come,
 That they bente on a bonet · and bare a topte saile 72
 Affor the wynde ffresshely · to make a good ffare.
 Than lay the lordis a-lee · with laste and with charge,
 And bare aboute the barge · and blamed the maister,
 That knewe not the kynde cours · that to the crafte longid, 76
 And warned him wisely · of the wedir-side.
 Thanne the maste in the myddis · at the monthe ende,
 Bowid ffor brestynge · and brouzte hem to lond;
 ffor ne had thei striked a strake · and sterid hem the better, 80
 And abated a bonet · or the blast come,
 They had be throwe ouere the borde · backwarde ichonne.
 And some were acombrid · with the conceill be-ffore,
 And wiste well y-now · how it sholde ende, 84
 Or some of the semble · shulde repente.
 Some helde with the mo · how it euere wente,
 And somme dede rith so · and wolld go no fforthier.
 Some parled as perte · as prouyd well after, 88
 And clappid more ffor the coyne · that the kyng oweth hem
 Thanne ffor comfforte of the comyne · that her cost paied,
 And were be-hote hansell · if they helpe wold,
 To be seruyd sekirly · of the same siluere. 92
 And some dradde dukis · and Do-well ffor-soke;

61. For *culorum*, see C. 4. 436.

65. Cf. That I ne myȝte *ferther a-foot*; B. 5. 6.

70. Cf. And brynge forth *balledre resones*; C. 12. 38.

75. MS. *abouȝte*.

89. MS. *owen*.

93. *The rest of the page (in the MS.) is blank.*

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